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NEAR EAST/SOUTH ASIA REPORT

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LEBANESE EXPORTS TO IRAQ REPORTED DOWN

Paris AL-MUSTAQBAL in Arabic No 330, 18 Jun 83 p 41

[Article: "How Can Lebanon Salvage Its Exports to Iraq"]

[Text] Lebanese exports to Iraq fell to their lowest level last May. The level of exports that month was very low.

Last month the value of industrial exports to Iraq amounted to 3,919,000 pounds only. According to the statistics of the Ministry of Industry and Oil this constitutes about 2.6 percent of total exports.

Last April, according to the statistics of the Beirut Chamber of Commerce, Lebanese exports to Iraq constituted 9.2 percent of total exports. This figure represents an 81.4 percent drop from last year's median average exports.

This decline in Lebanese exports to Iraq appears noteworthy or rather astounding when compared with Iraq's position as a market for Lebanese products. Last year Iraq was the second largest market after Saudi Arabia as far as Lebanese exports are concerned. Iraq never had any less than 25 percent of total Lebanese exports. In 1981 Iraq and Saudi Arabia competed for first place regarding the amount of goods they received from Lebanon or from a foreign source. The golden age of exports to Iraq came after war broke out in the Gulf. At that time Iraq turned to Lebanon and to other countries that export to it so that these countries can counter with their exports the shortage in supplies that resulted from the shut-down of the port of al-Basrah. The sea route to Iraq was blocked, and Iraq depended totally on two land routes: the first was from the port of al-'Aqabah through Jordan and then through Iraq and the second route was through Turkey.

Actually, Iraqi reasons for the decline of Lebanese exports to Iraq were also accompanied by Lebanese reasons. Thus, the decline of Lebanese exports to Iraq can be explained by the following reasons:

1. The ability of the Iraqi market to import goods declined, and the government adopted an austerity and a belt-tightening policy which was manifested in [a policy of] importing essential goods and no luxury goods and giving careful consideration to the quantities and prices of the goods that are imported.
2. Iraq imposed on countries exporting goods to it a condition that half the

credit [for the goods] be paid in cash, and payment of the rest would be deferred to a subsequent period, at least 14 months.

3. Exports by land to Iraq floundered because of the unstable security conditions in Lebanon's Biqa', an area through which trucks would have to pass. In addition, there are Syrian obstacles regarding the transit of goods to Iraq.

4. Conditions in north Lebanon are unsettled. Re-export traffic to Iraq in the port of Tripoli was brisk.

5. Cement and atharnite [meaning unknown] are no longer being exported to Iraq. These two products were a large part of Lebanon's exports to Iraq. The fact that these two products are not being exported has been the result of Iraqi conditions which are not suitable to construction and reconstruction projects.

Regardless of the reasons behind the decline in Lebanese exports to Iraq, the second reason, which has to do with the condition of deferred payments, is the most significant and the one that had the most influence on Lebanese export traffic. This is because under the current conditions Lebanese institutions cannot operate under that condition because they have a pressing need for liquid funds since inexpensive credit terms are not available to make up for the deferred payments that the Iraqi government would owe to Lebanese institutions.

Action from the state on this problem is still limited. So far, it has been restricted to a visit to Iraq by a representative of the National Council. [That official] spent several days in the Iraqi capital without producing any positive results. This is perhaps because the problem has to be dealt with on a higher level.

What has been said unofficially about possible solutions to this problem may be summarized in the three following [points]:

1. Employing a barter system with Iraq and importing from it oil, dates or barley.
2. The Bank of Lebanon could intervene in trade transactions and guarantee the debts in return for giving exporters easy term loans against these debts.
3. Lebanese banks could intervene by getting documentation from Iraq to guarantee the loans they would make to Lebanese exporters.

However, there are obstacles and problems with these solutions, and it is not certain, [furthermore], that Iraq would accept any one of them.

It seems there are Iraqi obstacles to the first solution, the one that has to do with barter. At this stage, Iraq depends on oil and dates to obtain the hard currency it needs at the present time in the wake of its declining currency reserves. Therefore, it is not easy for Iraq to accept a barter system, particularly with Lebanon, and to export its oil to Lebanon in exchange for Lebanon's exports to Iraq. It is known that there are other countries prepared to offer Iraq favorable terms based on the fact that it is an oil rich country that is now going through emergency conditions which cannot last forever.

Also Iraq is having no problem exporting its oil. Several countries want to purchase oil from Iraq despite the stagnation in the oil spot market.

Accordingly, several countries, including Morocco, Turkey and Jordan, offered favorable terms to Iraq and agreed to finance their exports to Iraq in return for deferred payments.

The second [proposed] solution regarding intervention by the Bank of Lebanon would be thwarted by the financial problem that Lebanon's treasury is facing. This problem makes the Bank of Lebanon unable to guarantee loans for many years.

The third solution regarding the intervention of Lebanese banks remains feasible; but such intervention would not be mandatory. Banks can play a certain role, but that role would remain relative to the ability of each bank and relative to the evaluation made by each bank of the exporter it will be dealing with.

No matter what, the government of Lebanon is facing a situation that demands attention on a priority basis, particularly under the difficult conditions that exports are facing.

Since Iraq is a principal outlet for Lebanon's industry and since finding an alternative to Iraq is no easy matter, it is expected that a solution will be reached with Iraq, which appears to be specially sympathetic with Lebanon. However, reaching such a solution requires prompt action because this is a Lebanese problem more than it is an Iraqi problem.

8592

CSO: 4404/498

ARMENIAN AFFAIRS

AIMS OF 'ARMENIAN CONGRESS' CONSIDERED 'DETRIMENTAL' TO ARMENIAN CAUSE

Tehran ALIK in Armenian 26 Jul 83 pp 1, 2

[Article by VAHRICH: "In Detriment to the Armenian Fight for Freedom"]

[Text] A meeting was held last week in Lausanne, under the name of "Armenian Congress," organized by a Swiss national and Protestant clergyman by the name of Reverend James Karnusian.

Although approximately 60 persons from various countries took part in the "Congress" (half of them French nationals), none of the political organizations -- the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, the Armenian Social Democrat Party, the Democratic Liberal Party, nor the Armenian Church -- took part.

Without going into the details of the "Congress" proceedings, we present below an article about the "Armenian Congress" by one of our colleagues, in which he, in an expressive and concise manner within the limits of his presentation, sheds light on its substance.

BBC, a spokesman for the British political scene, carried in its morning and evening news broadcasts on 18 July, allegedly a report from its correspondent in Switzerland, who reported that the "Second Armenian Congress" would be convening in Lausanne on 20 July. The correspondent also reported that the congress planned to condemn "terrorism" which, as is clearly stated in the definitions to be found in Western imperialist dictionaries, also and primarily encompasses national liberation armed struggles. Thus the so-called "Congress" would be condemning the national liberation revolutionary and armed struggle of the Armenian people. The so-called Second Armenian Congress, convened by a Protestant clergyman by the name of Karnusian, working in a Swiss environment and in no way linked to the Armenian Evangelical Church, strangely enough is a subject of interest to the BBC's news and political analysis department. Considering this to be important news, it not only reports on the congress but also presents an interview with the above-mentioned individual, while that same BBC totally ignored the many demonstrations conducted by many thousands of Armenians on 24 April. This fact cannot help but give rise to certain doubts and cannot help but suggest certain conclusions.

The BBC presents in a bizarre manner an embellished picture of the so-called Secret Army's even unsuccessful and misanthropic activities, constantly endeavoring to confuse public opinion, so that people are unable to take sides regarding the activities of the Justice Commandos and the Secret Army. This also gives rise to vague suspicions in a person's mind.

In political affairs it is considered a virtue to suspect one's adversary and enemy. But when doubts become convictions under a flood of evidence, silence no longer is a virtue. If the positive stand taken by the British propaganda agency toward the so-called "Armenian Congress" and the so-called "Secret Army" created the impression that there exists some organic link between the two above-mentioned phenomena, that impression becomes conviction when we read in the organ of one of the factions of the Secret Army, in recent issues of HAY PAYKAR -- HAYASTAN, not only the statement that they support the Armenian Congress, but also there is an extensive interview with the above-mentioned clergyman, and a favorable editorial on this issue, plus favorable publicity for the congress. And this newspaper also makes clear the fact that this solidarity dates from September 1979, from the time of the first congress.

But what does this congress seek to accomplish? At first glance it would seem that it has good intentions and no ulterior motives, a consequence of an affirmative aspiration born from Armenian sufferings. When one digs into the facts, however, a dangerous tendency is revealed, an attempt to carry the struggle for the Armenian Cause in a direction which the liberation struggle of the Armenian people long ago rejected, and which if successful will make the Armenians a tool of international imperialism and of the so-called superpowers, in this case the tool of Britain, in the perfidious hands of Albion. And the most important factor is that this is an emulation of a policy which does not proceed from the material conditions of the Armenian people, and especially the Armenians of the Diaspora, and their strategic demands. Let us clarify this fact. In HAY PAYKAR (No 55, pp 8-9), which not only carries a photograph of the clergyman "politician" but also an interview with him, the publisher states that "for a number of years now Armenian political independents have been working to establish a central organization of the Armenian Diaspora, capable of uniting all Armenian associations and organizations behind a single, common national platform." He then adds that the "Armenian Congress, taking the middle road of the Jewish International Congress and the Palestinian National Conference, proposes to perform the function of a democratic conference room, dealing with a general program...."

In all fairness we must note that the publisher's comment comes from the clergyman's statement in which, incidentally, he states that "the Jewish Congress, which was founded in 1897, has functioned as a political organization for the liberation of Israel. It contains elements which can be beneficial to us. The Palestinians have additional elements which can be of use to us...."

The newspaper publishers appear to have forgotten the clergyman's political views as expressed in his German-language newsletter and his booklet entitled "Arrants hayreniki zhoghovurde" [The People Without a Homeland], which is nothing but an Armenian variation of Zionism. This apologist of "Araratism" is unable to conceal his true colors with the plumage of progressiveness and the statements he made in the above-mentioned newspaper.

The newspaper's publishers, who display a favorable disposition toward this clergyman, are well acquainted with his political beliefs, but in order to neutralize the negative effect it generally has on the public, they deliberately address tendentious questions to him and receive from him a negative reply which, although diplomatic, is totally unable to conceal his sympathies for Zionism. He states that "in any case I myself am not emulating Theodor Herzl; ...I have also heard claims that I am an agent of the KGB, CIA, MOSSAD, and even an agent of the **It has been claimed that I have received hundreds of thousands of dollars, that I have been bought. For me it is important to pursue my goals without straying from the course. THEY COMPARE ME TO THEODOR HERZL, BUT WITHIN 50 YEARS THE JEWS HAD SUCCEEDED IN ESTABLISHING THEIR OWN GOVERNMENT. THEY ULTIMATELY SUCCEEDED....**" (Our emphasis -- V.).

The passage in boldface is highly indicative and reveals his political ideology. From this statement not only are his sympathies with Herzl, the father of Zionism, eminently clear, but it also reveals his political opportunism. This clergyman would do well to pray for the salvation of his own soul instead of engaging in politics, because this is how people end up who engage in political opportunism.

And now we see the true face of the "Secret Army" or the so-called "Popular Movement for the Liberation of Armenia" and the "Democratic Front of the Armenian National Movement," aligned with this movement and embracing its ideas. In doing this they are selling out the Armenian national liberation struggle to the benefit of the congress's master or, more accurately put, masters, agreeing to take part in this "Congress" farce, and not only failing to condemn it but declaring their solidarity in regard to its reactionary ideas and allowing, prior to convening of the congress, the insidious propaganda agency of Albion to announce that the so-called Second Armenian Congress will condemn armed actions in the name of the liberation of Armenia. "AND GOD CREATED MAN IN HIS OWN IMAGE AND LIKENESS."

A disappointment awaits people who do not learn from history, in the political whirlpool of blind groping. The Armenian people have always despised individuals, factions and groups which hitch themselves to the cart of foreigners. History is witness to this. Today as well the Armenian is filled with hatred toward groups and individuals hitched to the cart of foreigners. Persons who have failed to learn this lesson and who are incapable of recognizing this reality are fated ultimately to experience great and bitter disappointment.

8817

CSO: 4605/109

ARMENIAN AFFAIRS

TURKEY BLASTED FOR 'DISTORTION OF HISTORICAL FACTS'

Beirut AZTAG in Armenian 3 Aug 83 pp 1, 2

[Text] It is not difficult to determine the reasons behind futile and groundless accusations on the part of the leaders of Turkey's military regime against one country or another or, "with the aim of unmasking Armenian propaganda," the latest fruits of Turkish "ingeniousness"....

The nightmare brought about by Turkish actions, caused by Turkey, the murderer of a nation, and gradually taking on a more acute character, has recently impelled the Evrens and Turkmens to take new strides along the well-known political road of Turkish righteous indignation.

The author of the most recent "ingeniousness" is Turkey's minister of foreign affairs, who on Monday attempted to add Lebanon to the list of the accused. The Turkish foreign minister accused Lebanon, joining the company of France, Greece, Cyprus, and Switzerland (and not to forget us Armenians), of either direct or indirect complicity in the "Armenian terrorism" and even had the gall to admonish them after the fact: "The least that they could have done was not to allow those five Armenian young men, loaded down with weapons and ammunition, to board an airplane in Beirut which was flying to Lisbon...." What about the customs officials at Lisbon! What about the electronic and other types of scrutiny employed at airports? In his fury to accuse Lebanon, has Turkmen forgotten these points, throwing such absurd slander and demands right and left in his capacity as minister of foreign affairs?

Thank God that this Turkish government official does not dictate to Lebanon and other countries containing Armenian communities, forcing them to prohibit Armenians from traveling. In the final analysis the world is dealing with a military regime in which an occupation-force mentality prevails....

* * *

Turkmen seems to have made another "discovery": he announces that in the near future a "document" will be made public which "will unmask Armenian propaganda."

One wonders what is the content of that "document" which "ingenious" Turkey will use as a new weapon in order to cover up the truth about the Genocide and the taking away of the national rights of the Armenian people....

Even prior to the time it is made public, one can make rough suppositions about it: in fact Turkmen's boss, Kenan Evren, announced on Sunday that "present-day Turkey has been Turkish for more than a millennium, and shall remain so." "The illusory and unrealistic demands of Armenian young men who have been subjected to brainwashing shall not be met; " Turkey "will not YIELD a single inch of land to the Armenians" (Our emphasis -- Ed.).

In other words, the inventive historian Evren and his colleagues will probably make public, following Kemyuran Gyuryun's "ingeniousness," a new product of Turkish imagination, in order to prove that a thousand years ago, that is, in 983 A.D., when the Kingdom of Bagratuni and principalities of Siunik and Artsruni existed in Armenia, when Byzantine had not yet fought the famous battle of Manazkert (in 1071), today's Turkish lands... "were Turkish."

We must again thank God that the Evrens are not also Turkicizing Mesrop Mashtots, Gregory the Illuminator, King Trdat, and Tigran the Great.

One would expect from the Turkish leaders, pursued by Armenian justice, treacherous claims to "revise" history and in like vein to "correct" past and present historians. What a waste of effort! These futile accusations and groundless "inventions," as well as every step taken along the road of a head-in-the-sand policy, reveals Turkey's guilt one step further and nails Turkey solidly to the dock of the accused.

8817
CSO: 4605/125

MARA OFFICIAL DISCUSSES IMPROVED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

Algiers ALGERIE ACTUALITE in French 11-17 Aug 83 p 2

[Article by Fatiha Akeb: "In Spite of the Drought--"]

[Text] The 1982-1983 agricultural year was considered especially dry. However, the general secretary of the MARA [Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform] emphasized this week at a working session with the national press, "Every citizen in every part of the land could observe this year that the markets for agricultural products are well supplied with the most diverse foodstuffs. This kind of abundance, especially of vegetables, meat-fed chickens and eggs, has not been seen for a very long time." Continuing his report, the general secretary stated that the explanation for this situation is to be found "in the political trend, increasingly favorable to the agricultural sector, followed by the government, which has succeeded in restoring confidence to the farmers; and next it is found in the effort to organize and mobilize all of the farmers from all sectors--and all agricultural managers." It is the latter who, working in the field, are trying to wipe out the effects of the problems and constantly asking more of themselves. Sample figures are provided to demonstrate the quality of their efforts. Thus, for 1983, "areas planted with tomatoes went from 7,000 hectares to 13,000 hectares," an increase of nearly 100 percent. In the same way, mechanization of potato cultivation by the introduction of 240 lines serving nearly 3,500 hectares has made it possible to improve the yield. Mechanization has also been introduced for the first time to develop the dried vegetable harvest; those fields have clearly diminished in recent years. But the MARA is credited with particular progress in the sector of poultry breeding: "Production of meat-fed chickens went from 80,000 tons in 1979 to 150,000 tons in 1983, a 50-percent increase." Hence the abundance of chicken in the markets, for 18 DA [dinars] per kg, whereas in the recent past the price has been as high as 25 DA per kg. Meat-fed chicken is one of the few products for which there is no need to have recourse to importation, since our own production entirely satisfies the country's white meat requirements. We are currently producing almost 66,000 tons "for a projected requirement of 63,000 tons." So much is being produced that it has become difficult to sell in the usual way the available quantity of white meat. Production of eggs for local consumption--long stifled by massive importation--was abandoned by the poultry breeders, who were unable to "dispose of their production." However, once again there seems to be a growing interest in national egg production, which currently supplies only 30 percent of our consumption and which, according to information provided by the MARA, will totally meet our requirements in

1984, or 1985 at the latest. The revival of national production has already made it possible to reduce egg imports by 60 percent. As for red meat, the general secretary emphasized in his speech the increased control exercised by the government sector--which had been totally absent--over the production of red meat.

The recent creation of regional meat offices "has already controlled 7,500 tons this year...They will control 20,000 tons in 1984." This will make possible, among other things, better control of the market by the state. We produce 75 percent of our red meat consumption, that is to say 150,000 tons, and we are importing the remainder, 50,000 tons. In the debates that followed the intervention by MARA officials, the price question was discussed at length. It is important to the MARA that price policy take the producer's costs into consideration, to guarantee him an encouraging profit margin. It is well known that local meat prices are higher than those of imported meat. Prices should be studied by the National Price Commission; while prices should encourage national production, they should be within the reach of small markets. However, the price of imported meat is not the only parameter capable of encouraging national production; that factor enters in, it is true, but only in the last instance.

Workers who earn the minimum--and they are many--would be relieved to pay 35 DA a kg for meat now and then. We are not importing because meat prices on the international market are low, but because we do not yet produce enough to do without that low-priced meat. Finally, with regard to citrus fruits, it should be recalled that it will be necessary to wait 2 or 3 years before we can see the orchards develop and be sure of "planting unprecedentedly large areas with 40,000 hectares of citrus fruit per year, and more than 20,000 hectares of grapes for eating," and before we will no longer need to import a single plant.

8946

CSO: 4519/312

RETURN OF WAFD PARTY EXAMINED

London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic No 178, 9-15 Jul 80 pp 20-22

[Article: "Will the Wafd Party Resume Its Political Activity **After** Ramadan?"]

[Text] A decision on the new bill regulating the 1984 elections for the People's Assembly has been postponed. Leaders of the National Party are waiting for the decision by the Supreme Court for Administrative Justice in the lawsuit that was filed to revoke the mandatory exclusion of Fu'ad Siraj-al-Din and Ibrahim Faraj from political activity so that the return of the Wafd Party to political activity can be completed. Hence arises the question: Will the Wafd Party become engaged in political activity publicly?

Last November 25 at noon, 31 political figures were released from prison; they had been taken into custody on the basis of decrees issued by al-Sadat on September 2. Among those politicians who were released were Wafdi leader, Fu'ad Siraj al-Din and four leading figures in the Wafd Party: 'Abd-al-Fattah Hasan, Ibrahim Tal'at, 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Shurbaji and Hamid al-Azhari. The pasha's mansion in Garden City was thus restored to life. For several days the mansion became a meeting place for supporters of the Wafd Party of all tendencies. Nothing like that had happened since the Revolution of 1952. The only thing similar to that since then happened in 1977 when the new Wafd Party was being established. Therefore, the question that is being asked in Cairo now is this: Will the Wafd Party come back to the scene? If it does, what position can it hold among Egypt's political parties? What do supporters of the Wafd Party expect from President Mubarak?

These questions require us to go back to the story of the Wafd Party [as it unfolds] in three experiences the party had over a period of more than 60 years.

The curious irony about the birth of the Egyptian Wafd Party^{*} is that it did not start out as a political party, but rather as a group of people whose purpose in getting together was to negotiate with the British the independence of Egypt after the end of World War I. This group, however, was soon spearheading the largest political party Egypt had till 1952. This party, which was headed by Sa'd Zaghlul until his death on 27 August 1927 and then by Mustafa al-Nahhas after that, included among its members various social groups in Egypt. Its leaders, however, have always been a class of large landowners and capitalists. These were

* Translator's note: Wafd in Arabic means delegation.

the two groups of people that led the National Movement in Egypt until the 1952 Revolution. Among the most outstanding leaders of the Wafd besides Sa'd Zaghlul and al-Nahhas were 'Ali Sha'rawi Pasha, Ahmad Mahir Pasha, al-Nuqrashi Pasha, Makram 'Ubayd Pasha, Hamad al-Basil Pasha, Mahmud Abu al-Nasr Bey and others.

Despite the success it achieved in setting up its committees in various parts of the country, the organizations of the Wafd Party were not strong enough to enable it to enter into a decisive confrontation with the parties of the minority that were being supported by the king and by the British. Therefore, the Wafd continued to depend primarily on the spontaneous feelings of citizens and on their attachment to the party; it depended on that more than it did on a strong organization. Furthermore, the Wafd party did not preserve its organizational cohesiveness throughout the years that preceded the 1952 Revolution. During those years the party was subjected to numerous instances of discord. Also several distinct factions developed within the party. This phenomenon is the source of that diversity that may be found among members of the Wafd Party in Egypt now. But the most significant split that the Wafd Party faced was that which occurred in 1937 when the two leaders, Ahmad Mahir and Mahmud Fahmi al-Nuqrashi--and both men are veteran Wafdi fighters, representing a hard-line tendency within the party--announced that al-Nahhas had departed from the principles of Sa'd Zaghlul and that they were therefore forming a new party called al-Hay'ah al-Sa'diyah, [The Sa'di Organization]. They made that announcement on 14 January 1938. Safiyah Zaghlul, Sa'd Zaghlul's widow, known as Umm al-Misriyyin [the Mother of Egyptians] supported the new party which was now located in the home of Sa'd Zaghlul, a residence that was known as Bayt al-Ummah [the nation's house]. This Wafdi tendency was represented by the attorney 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Shurbaji. But the most important faction that distinguished itself in the Wafd Party was the youth faction, the Wafdist Vanguard. It was led by Muhammad Mandur, Mustafa Musa, 'Abd-al-Muhsin Hammudah and Sayf-al-Din al-Ghazali, the brother of al-Hajjah Zaynab al-Ghazali, a veteran fighter in the Muslim Brothers Group. During the forties this faction opposed the domination of the Wafd Party by large landowners, chief among whom was Fu'ad Siraj-al-Din. Remnants of that faction can still be found in one of the independent Wafdi tendencies led by 'Abd-al-Muhsin Hammudah.

The Wafd Party was a popular majority party from the time the first parliamentary elections were held under the 1923 Constitution until the revolution of 1952.

'Abd-al-Nasir's Loathing

Nevertheless, the experience the Wafd Party had before 1952 was a rich one. During that period the party played a principal role in [the country's] political life, both in positions of power and in the opposition. But the party's experience after the 1952 Revolution was the exact opposite. The Revolution declared its hostility to the Wafd Party from the very first day of its existence because it saw that party as its principal competition because of the popularity the party had enjoyed for 30 years. On more than one occasion 'Abd-al-Nasir expressed his loathing for the leaders of the Wafd party, particularly al-Nahhas and Siraj al-Din. When the revolution broke out, both men were spending their summer vacations in Europe. They returned immediately to meet the leaders of the new administration. But 'Abd-al-Nasir deliberately let them wait about 3 hours before allowing them to meet him.

When the law regulating political parties was issued on 9 September 1952, it was obvious that the Wafd Party was the target of that law. Nevertheless, the Wafd tried to adjust to the new age and to reorganize accordingly. But 'Abd-al-Nasir did not give the Wafdis a chance. On 18 January 1953 he pushed Muhammad Najib into issuing a law disbanding political parties. Ever since then Wafdis have been denied participation in any political activity in accordance with the law of mandatory exclusion from political activity. When Mustafa al-Nahhas died on 27 August 1965, some Wafdis organized a funeral for him in al-Tahrir Square in the center of Cairo. Early in the morning on the following day, security agencies arrested all Wafdis who took part in that funeral. Most of them remained in jail until al-Sadat released them one after the other early in the seventies.

When it became clear to the Wafdis that al-Sadat was gradually moving away from the principles of 'Abd-al-Nasir's system, the ranks of the party started to come to life after 20 years of exclusion from political activity. The Wafdist Vanguard was the first Wafdist faction to enter the field of political activity. It was followed by growing numbers of Fu'ad Siraj-al-Din's and 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Shurbaji's supporters. This activity manifested itself in two principal ways: an attack on 'Abd-al-Nasir's undemocratic age, and a call for the elimination of the Socialist Union and for the freedom to organize political parties. The Bar Association was the principal scene for this activity since a large number of its members are affiliated with the Wafd or sympathetic to the party. Also the past board of the Bar Association, which was disbanded last July, included three Wafdis: Hamid al-Azhari, Muhammad 'Id and Fu'ad 'Id. Some members of the Wafdist Vanguard tried to infiltrate the university by establishing an alliance with leftist elements in the students' movement. In March 1975 'Abd-al-Muhsin Hammudah tried to hold a ceremony at Cairo University commemorating the anniversary of the death of Mustafa Musa, a leader of the Wafdist Vanguard. However, the turnout was small for the ceremony which was limited to a few fiery speeches that culminated in a march in which no more than 100 persons took part. The marchers called for freedom for political parties. It seems that this experience made the Wafdis change their minds about infiltrating the university, and concentrated their activity on the Bar Association.

At the same time 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Shurbaji was going ahead with his initiative to organize a new party called the Democratic Party. This was before the organization of parties was officially allowed in Egypt. It seemed that that party was reviving Sa'd Zaghlul's Wafd Party or the Sa'di Organization which had broken with the party of al-Nahhas and Siraj-al-Din, proclaiming the Sa'dis to be the ones who had truly preserved the principles and ideas of Sa'd Zaghlul after al-Nahhas had moved the Wafd Party away from those principles. But the principal sector of the Wafd Party continued to rally around Siraj al-Din despite the activities that were carried out by al-Shurbaji and members of the Wafdist Vanguard. Some members of the Wafdist Vanguard led by Sayf al-Din al-Ghazali joined Fu'ad Siraj-al-Din after the fight that broke out between al-Ghazali and 'Abd-al-Muhsin Hammudah. That fight took place because Hammudah was accused by al-Ghazali of trying to introduce leftist or even communist ideas into the liberal principles of the Wafd. Siraj-al-Din, however, did not begin to take action until after al-Sadat's decision was made on 11 November 1976 to turn the platforms into parties. Siraj-al-Din Pasha found here in the law that regulates the activities of political parties an opportunity to reorganize the Wafd Party.

Silver Spoons

Siraj-al-Din was preoccupied with preparations for organizing the Wafd Party under the name the New Wafd Party. He asked Dr Wahid Ra'fat to formulate the party's program. The establishment of the new party was announced at the Bar Association on 23 August 1977, the anniversary of the two leaders, Sa'd Zaghlul and al-Nahhas. The party acquired its legal status in accordance with the law that regulates the activities of political parties, and it began to pursue its activities. Some members of the opposition, such as Dr Hilmi Murad, Dr Mahmud al-Qadi and al-Shaykh 'Ashur, joined the party. The party's executive board was elected with Fu'ad Siraj-al-Din, chairman and 'Abd-al-Fattah Hasan, Ibrahim Faraj, Dr Wahid Ra'fat, 'Abd-al-Khaliq al-Shinnawi and Maj Gen 'Abd-al-Mun'im Hasan, members. At the same time the Commission on Political Parties turned down a request from 'Abd-al-Muhsin Hammudah to proclaim the Wafdist Vanguard a political party. That rejection, however, did not make Hammudah give up on his party and join Siraj-al-Din in his new experiment. But that third experiment in the history of the Wafd Party was not destined to be long-lived. The authorities soon began accusing the New Wafd of trying to take Egypt back to pre-revolutionary times and erase thereby more than a quarter of a century of Egyptian history. The confrontation between the Wafd and the authorities was heightened when Siraj-al-Din began attacking the government and the party of Mamduh Salim, Egypt's Arab Socialist Party. The most salient feature of that attack was Siraj-al-Din's famous speech which he delivered during the elections campaign for the People's Assembly in the Customs electoral district in Alexandria in May 1978. Elections were being held there to choose a new representative for that district after the expulsion of al-Shaykh 'Ashur from the assembly. On that day Siraj-al-Din said, "They fault us for being born with silver spoons in our mouths. There is nothing wrong with that as long as these silver spoons were legitimately and properly acquired. There is something wrong, however, when people who did not have a silver spoon, a wooden spoon or even a tin spoon when they were born are suddenly inundated with silver spoons from sources that are unknown. This is the question, and people have a right to know where all this [wealth] came from."

It was at that time that al-Sadat began his attack on Wafdis. On 15 May 1978 he delivered a speech in which he said, "There is no place in our midst for those ministers who had ruined political life before the Revolution." Five days after that he conducted a referendum that included a provision for the mandatory exclusion from political activity of ministers who held office before the 1952 Revolution. That provision applied to Siraj-al-Din and to three leaders of the Wafd Party who had served as ministers before the 1952 Revolution. They were 'Abd-al-Fattah Hasan, Ibrahim Faraj and Muhammad Salah-al-Din. To protest that exclusion, the General Assembly of the New Wafd Party held a meeting and decided on 3 June 1978 to disband the party. The deposed leaders of the Wafd Party filed lawsuits to repeal the law of mandatory exclusion from political activity. The Administrative Court considered one of those lawsuits, that of 'Abd-al-Fattah Hasan, and ruled in his favor. But the government appealed the ruling to the Supreme Administrative Court which has not yet issued its decision on the appeal.

It seems that some leaders of the Wafd Party regretted the decision to disband the party. Therefore, early in 1981 they started thinking about reorganizing the party. Ibrahim Tal'at, one of the party's leaders announced, "The principle behind the idea of bringing back the party is to have us on the scene in case

of any anticipated change. The question is quite simple. If the party's General Assembly met and disbanded the Wafd Party, then it can also meet and reconstitute it. We don't need a new law because we are in fact an existing party. We are thinking about bringing back the Wafd Party and keeping the positions of the leaders who are subject to the mandatory exclusion from political activity vacant."

At the same time a few Wafdi lawyers were taking vigorous actions to reorganize the Wafd Party. Chief among them was Zaghlul Bisharah, the attorney. A committee was formed for that purpose, and it included Muhammad Fahmi al-Nahhas, a civil servant and a relative of al-Nahhas Pasha; Salih Nazmi, a civil servant; and Ibrahim Sulayman 'Ashur, a civil servant. There was a strong tendency among the members of that committee to announce the return of the Wafd Party last August 27, at a ceremony commemorating the anniversary of Sa'd Zaghlul and al-Nahhas. Ceremonies commemorating that occasion had been prohibited by the authorities since 1979 because a permit had not been obtained. This year, however, members of the Wafd Party applied for and received a permit to hold their ceremony. But the authorities used force to prevent the ceremony from being held and created a legal problem around the execution of the order. [Through all this] the committee in charge of reorganizing the party continued its activities and its preparations to announce the return of the party on the first occasion. When al-Sadat launched his campaign of arrests in September 1981, Siraj-al-Din was one of the most prominent people arrested. Al-Sadat attacked Siraj-al-Din publicly, vowing, "By the sovereignty of the law I will never show him any mercy." Afterwards official newspapers published [a report] that the Public Intelligence Agency had uncovered "the entire conspiracy that was being planned by the leaders of the disbanded Wafd Party."

Mubarak's Administration

But the new age that President Mubarak began is raising questions here in Cairo about the future of the Wafd Party. Mubarak had declared unequivocally, "There are no hard feelings for anyone."

Although the government's official position on the matter has not yet been determined, all the statements that were made recently about the New Wafd Party were made by Mr Muhammad Rashwan, minister of state for People's Assembly and Consultative Council affairs. Mr Rashwan said that the return of the New Wafd Party was doubtful because most of the party's leaders were subject to mandatory exclusion from political activity. Mr Rashwan added, "The return of the New Wafd Party poses no threat to the National Party, but it does pose a threat to the opposition parties."

And now what do the opposition parties think about the return of the New Wafd Party?

Dr Rif'at al-Sa'id, secretary general of the Grouping Party says, "As a matter of principle we support the right of national forces to organize political parties. It is a major crime to deny any political faction under any pretext the right of exercising its role in Egyptian political life. In restricting the right of numerous political forces to assert themselves on the political scene, the law that regulates the activities of political parties is burying its head in the

sand because no law can restrict people's right to exercise their political role. People will exercise that role any way: they will do so publicly, secretly, legitimately or illegitimately; they will assert themselves as a movement or as a party, but they will assert themselves and they will have an effect on political life.

"Let us re-affirm two matters.

"First, all national and progressive forces have a right to establish their legitimate parties and to exercise their role on an equal basis. Only the public can make a judgment on the credibility of these parties and their programs.

"Second, what we want to emphasize is this: the Wafd Party exists whether some people and other political forces want it to exist or not. We are only asking for recognition of an accomplished fact."

[Question] What would you say about the fact that the Wafd Party is being accused of ruining political life in Egypt before the Revolution?

[Answer] I don't want to get involved in a lot of historical facts. But if it's being said that the Wafd Party ruined political life before the Revolution, [let me ask] why is it being forgotten that the Wafd Party stood up to the [royal] palace, stood up to the occupation and repealed the 1936 treaty? Why has it been forgotten that it was under a Wafd government that Egypt waged for the first and the last time an armed people's war against the British?

Every party has had its mistakes and its good deeds. If the Wafd Party ruined political life before the Revolution, let me ask [those who are making that charge] what do they think of the Socialist Union and what do they think of al-Tahrir Authority? They themselves said that these organizations ruined political life. In fact, they accused the vanguard organization of having ruined everything. Nevertheless, they deny [their responsibility for what happened] or they declare that all of them were merely members in the organization or hoped to become members in it. If we were to judge people according to what we think of them, we would be giving ourselves the right to dictate our wishes to others. If those people who are accusing the Wafd Party of ruining political life before the Revolution are using this as their argument [against the Wafd], and if the public is wise and well-guided, let them say that. Let them allow the Wafd Party to exist, and the public will be able to tell who spoiled political life and who is spoiling political life. There is a major difference [here] between the past tense and the present tense.

Another Opinion

Mr Mustafa Kamil Murad, president of the socialist Liberal Party had this to say about the return of the New Wafd Party: "We in the Liberal Party think there ought to be no restrictions on the establishment of political parties because these parties are an expression of the intellectual tendencies that exist among the masses of our people. Any repression of these ideas or tendencies entails that they would operate in secret. Since we are emphasizing the principle of freedom of thought, freedom of opinion and open dialogue, we accordingly favor the emergence of all ideas and ideologies and the declaration of those ideas and ideologies in platforms, planks or newspapers."

He added, "Fu'ad Siraj-al-Din is a suitable leader for the Wafd Party. He is an intelligent, cunning, resourceful politician who can make demands on people."

Engineer Ibrahim Shukri, president of the opposition socialist Labor Party, had this to say about the return of the Wafd Party. "When we talk about this subject, we are making an ideological and a fundamental assumption that organizing parties and calling for the formation of parties is an inalienable constitutional right that should not be denied to anyone or any group under any terms or under any pretext. When the Commission on Political Parties approved the establishment of the Labor Party--and we attended that session which was held in December 1978--we stated it for the record--and this is in the minutes of the meeting--that although we are grateful for the commission's approval of the establishment of the Labor Party, we think that the establishment of parties should not be done by a committee, nor should a committee set the conditions for the organization of a party. Therefore [we think that] members of the Wafd Party have a right to organize their party in any form and with any of the groups that were under its banner before the Revolution. In addition, we think that increasing political parties in general would strengthen [the notion of] multiple parties and the idea that parties are not to be organized by decisions made in high places, decisions made by government or by the executive authority. Therefore, we welcome the presence of new parties because the organization of these new parties in this manner would make them no longer suspect of being organized in a certain context or with certain conditions."

Fathi Radwan, a well-known member of the Egyptian opposition, also welcomed the return of the Wafd. Mr Radwan said, "If Fu'ad Siraj-al-Din were to give up the attempt to reorganize the Wafd, there will be no Wafd Party. First of all Fu'ad Siraj-al-Din is one person who can bring people together. He is a broad-minded leader who puts up with the pettiness of supporters."

The Wafd Will Return after Ramadan

And now what are the old Wafd Party enthusiasts saying about all this? Mr Ibrahim Faraj, one of the Wafd Party's prominent leaders, had worked with al-Nahhas for almost 50 years.

We asked Mr Faraj this question: "There is talk these days that the New Wafd Party which had disbanded itself in 1978 will resume its political activity soon. How true is that?"

[Answer] Actually senior members of the Wafd Party--leaders and supporters--never stopped meeting and deliberating about the country's political situation. They did that, first, because they are citizens and, second, because their leaders had taken part in political life in Egypt a long time ago. We concluded that the climate had changed considerably and that the reasons for which the Wafd had disbanded itself and suspended its activities had ceased to exist. We became quite satisfied with President Husni Mubarak and with the talks and speeches he made. In all his talks he indicated quite clearly and unequivocally that Egyptians were equal, that Egypt was everyone's mother country and that democracy was not the exclusive possession of anyone. We were relieved by these statements, and we began communicating with [the people in government] so they would have no qualms about the re-establishment of the party, and they would be satisfied that

what we will do will be in the interests of the country. Therefore, the Wafd Party will return after we complete the political measures that we think must be taken before our party returns, and that will be very soon. I believe it will not be beyond the month of Ramadan.

[Question] But we know that you insist that the Wafd should return with Fu'ad Siraj-al-Din as its president. How will this be when there is a decision against him and against you to exclude you from political activity?

[Answer] I know that. But when the decision to exclude us from political activity was issued against us--and there were four of us: two died and I and Fu'ad Siraj-al-Din survived--the late 'Abd-al-Fattah Hasan, who was one of the four, asked us to file a lawsuit asking that that decree be declared invalid. He wanted us to prove that we had not ruined political life [in the country] simply because we held positions in the cabinet before the Revolution. The court actually ruled in his favor. It ruled that he may not be excluded from political activity as long as there was no evidence that he took part in political corruption. The mere fact that he was in the cabinet is not proof of political corruption. We took this judgment and we did nothing about it. Siraj al-Din and I did not file lawsuits at that time because we did not accept that law. However, after we reconsidered the matter under the new climate we thought we should file a lawsuit immediately asking that the decision to exclude us from political activity be revoked. We consider that decision to be null and void and almost non-existent. However, the fact that we filed a lawsuit does not mean that we stop [our efforts to] establish the party pending a settlement of that lawsuit. Not at all. The Wafd will rise after the political measures for its establishment are completed by the party. And this will be very soon as I told you.

[Question] Some people are saying that the Wafd Party will not return without Fu'ad Siraj-al-Din. What will happen if the court does not rule in his favor or if obstacles continue to be placed in front of the return of the Wafd Party?

[Answer] It is true that we cannot do without Fu'ad Siraj al-Din. He is a man who has the qualities of leadership and he also has an attractive personality. Some personalities are repulsive, but Fu'ad Siraj al-Din's personality is by nature attractive. I believe that there is nothing to keep Fu'ad Siraj al-Din from presiding over the Wafd Party. First, because the State Security Court is committed to the judgment it issued. Second, because the president, according to Article Five of the law can exempt people who have been under mandatory exclusion from political activity. But if obstacles continue to be placed in front of the party, we will return anyway and let the chips fall where they may. We do not want the party to come back in an atmosphere of defiance or challenge. But if matters become complicated and we find that evil elements are winning, we will assume another position. We will have to fight on numerous fronts, but before we begin fighting against those enemies, we must exhaust all the political methods that are available to us to save ourselves all this trouble.

[Question] Can you define for us the forms of that struggle?

[Answer] I do not wish to anticipate events, but let me assure you that the Wafd will return and, God willing, it will return with Fu'ad Siraj al-Din.

[Question] Do you believe that the New Wafd will be able to regain the popularity that it had before the Revolution, after the charges that have been made against it and after many years of not being engaged in political activity?

[Answer] When the Wafd Party was organized in February 1978 under the name the New Wafd Party, it was organized with the approval of the authority and in accordance with the law of parties which existed then. The establishment of the party confirmed the declaration made by the late Anwar al-Sadat about the fact that the regime's revolutionary law in Egypt was being replaced by constitutional law which was taking over. When the New Wafd Party was established, the nation rallied around it in an unprecedented manner, and that equally astonished the rulers and those who are ruled. In fact, what happened exceeded the expectations of those concerned with the matter: it exceeded our own expectations. Everyone from all classes and from all levels [of society] wanted to join us. I can tell you that we gave out about 1 million application forms for membership: company presidents, college deans and university professors from Aswan to Alexandria joined us out of faith and conviction. They paid membership dues and they made financial and moral contributions. But it seems that this strong popularity was not looked upon favorably by Anwar al-Sadat himself. It seems that he thought we would become a party of people who would cheer for him; he did not think at all that the Wafd would regain its first course so quickly. In [assuming] this, however, he forgot two matters:

First, [he forgot that] the Wafd Party is like no other party. It was born directly from the nation in 1918 when the nation gave the party the authorization, with the signatures of 14 million Egyptians who were the population of Egypt at that time, to speak with the British on its behalf. The British told Sa'd Zaghlul, "Who are you to represent the nation?" And Sa'd Zaghlul produced the document that authorized him to speak on behalf of the nation. Everyone in the nation had signed or placed his mark or his fingerprint on that document, giving Sa'd Zaghlul the authority to speak on behalf of the Egyptian people. That document is now in the Nation's House, in the Sa'd Zaghlul Museum. These authorizations are a unique phenomenon in the history of political parties in the world. Nowhere in the world in modern history is there a party that came to life by means of a written authorization from the people. That fact had its effect on [subsequent] generations because each family in Egypt feels that it had something to do with the Wafd Party and that its grandfather or its great grandfather was one of those who signed the authorization which brought the Wafd Party to life. Families consider that part of the heritage they pass on from one generation to the next. This is a psychological and a moral point that cannot be overlooked.

The second matter [al-Sadat forgot about] is the funeral of al-Nahhas Pasha. When al-Nahhas died on 23 August 1965, 1 million Egyptians walked in his funeral. I am not the one saying this; Haykal said it in AL-AHRAM during 'Abd-al-Nasir's administration, and foreign newspapers said it too. It was a curious matter indeed: 90 percent of those who walked in the funeral were young people, under 40. In other words, they were the children of the Revolution. Thus, [the people in government] could not think that it was the leaders of the Wafd who had planned this funeral. Actually, we were afraid that no one would come to the man's funeral. It was summer, and we thought who was going to remember al-Nahhas after 20 years? Therefore, I called 'Ali Sabri in Alexandria after making an agreement to that effect with Fu'ad Siraj-al-Din and Wafd leaders, and I asked

that we be allowed to bury al-Nahhas near Sa'd Zaghlul at [the latter's] tomb. I was making the request to honor al-Nahhas and because we feared that no one would come to his funeral. But 'Ali Sabri turned down my request and had his office manager tell me that that was a matter that required a law and a decree and things like that. Therefore, we set up a tent [for the mourners], and about 10 a.m. people began coming in slowly. Before the funeral procession reached Tahrir Square thousands of citizens had joined the funeral. It were as though they had suddenly descended from the sky. It was incredible, and Fu'ad Siraj al-Din and I were not able to continue walking. So we were taken by car to the grave where we buried him. He was buried in the ground like any poor man. Afterwards we built a tomb for the man who, it was said, had exploited and corrupted people. History has been falsified: al-Nahhas's good deeds have been replaced with evil deeds, and every evil in the book has been attributed to him. However, God will let the truth come out. Suffice it to say that no one was able to cite one incident to prove that al-Nahhas was a corrupt man.

As I told you al-Sadat forgot about these two matters. He thought that the Wafd will be a party that would cheer for him. Therefore, when the party came into being in 1978 with his approval, Anwar al-Sadat sent us a telegram congratulating us. The telegram was full of praise and good wishes, and al-Sadat issued a presidential decree appointing the president of the Wafd Party member in the Central Committee of the Socialist Union. But it was 100 days after the president sent this pleasant telegram that events occurred which I must mention. The regions, governorates and administrative districts came to our rescue, providing the party with quarters and with old members and the sons and grandsons of old members. These centers in rural areas began a highly organized and swift effort to recruit into the party all those who came to it. Then there was the festive gathering in Alexandria which infuriated al-Sadat. We had held this festive gathering to show support for one of our candidates, and many people attended it. It was said that 30,000 persons came to that gathering, but I think there were more than that. On the following day or on the day after that al-Sadat had an attack of hysteria: he condemned us and accused us of corruption. Then he held a referendum that cost him 2 million pounds so he could say that members of the Wafd party were no good. He issued Law Number 33 for 1978 and called it the Domestic Front Protection Act. It included among other things a decree barring politicians who had held cabinet positions before 1952 from political activity. In addition, it imposed restrictions and rules on political activity that made such activity impossible. Therefore, we met and we said that we could not accept an existence on the periphery of political life. We said that the Wafd Party had been born to carry out its national role. But now that it is being made to fight in this manner, the only thing we can do is suspend our activity. The Wafd Party was disbanded on 2 June 1978, only 100 days after it was established. One party member wrote a book entitled "Hizb al-Mi'ah Yawm" [The Political Party That Lasted 100 Days].

[Question] Don't you think that it was a mistake to disband the party? Don't you think that the party could have suspended its activity, as the Grouping Party did, or looked for new leadership instead of insisting on certain figures?

[Answer] The question is not that of the leaders of the Wafd. What happened was that they wanted to make political action impossible. Individuals do not make or break the party because all of us individuals will certainly die and will not live forever. We are now taking quick action and taking advantage of the opportunity afforded by the change in the climate to restore the activity of the

party. We will then leave our positions to young people. We want to create a generation and develop a staff that can take our place because we will not live forever. This is our primary objective. I remember that when we established the party in 1978, I was authorized by the party to contact the government as it was then represented by the Commission on Political Parties. Mustafa Khalil told me, "One year only." And I told him, "One year only because our objective is to develop a staff and people who will carry the torch in our place." This has always been the plan of the Wafd. Sa'd Pasha had a notebook which contained the [names of] first generation Wafdis, second generation Wafdis and third generation Wafdis. Now at our age we do need a staff that can carry on the mission. But what happened in 1978 was intended to impede the activities of the Wafd and to turn it into a weak and frail party that would not perform its duties as it should. In addition, such intervention in the freedom of organizing parties after the government gave its permission for the establishment of those parties indicates the government's ill intentions and its desire to do away with the party that represents the center in Egypt. In addition, when the Wafd decided to disband, that meant that its activities were suspended. That was all. The decision to disband was made at the suggestion of the late Zuhayr Jaranah. The General Assembly announced to the party that it rejected the government's intervention in the party's affairs, that it had confidence in the party's leaders and that it would not accept operating without those leaders. The problem then is not that of individuals; the problem has to do with a principle and an idea. It is the problem of whether or not a party exists, and if it exists, how it is to exist.

[Question] The Wafd Party did repeal the 1936 treaty and foreign privileges as well before the Revolution. It proclaimed an armed struggle, and it contributed to the establishment of the Arab League. What contributions can the Wafd Party make to an independent Egypt?

[Answer] The old Wafd Party had a program and the New Wafd Party has a program. When the Wafd party is organized in the near future, it will consider the new and the old programs, and it will come out with a new program that will be compatible with the development of events. For example, the country lacks true democracy. What is happening in the country, the shifting back and forth between the right and the left, is threatening the future of Egypt. It is the result of a lack of balance [provided by] the center, which is the Wafd. Democracy means the Wafd. Democracy without the Wafd is a lie. It is the Wafd that represents the center or the center around which people rally. The Wafd used to comprise all tendencies which were fused together in the party and created a middle class that protected Egypt from radical tendencies. When they wanted to keep the Wafd party out of politics, what happened happened. In 30 years freedom was lost, wars were fought, and selfishness, negligence and corruption became widespread. The economic crises we've had have been devastating. We've lived in fear and terror for 30 years. An official told me once that he was afraid to talk to his wife while eating dinner lest they may have placed a microphone or a listening device in one of the buttons of her dress to spy on him. This is how far-reaching paranoia had become. This is how terrified people had become. How can we remove that terror gradually by restoring freedom and democracy?

In the days of the Wafd, the nation was one front and there was no sectarian dissension. Quite the contrary al-Shaykh Hasan al-Banna used to honor al-Nahhas and he used to dread having a conflict with him. I remember attending a meeting

which included al-Nahhas and al-Banna. Al-Nahhas told al-Banna, "I am more devout than you are. There can be no manipulation of religion. The attempt to reach people's minds with this kind of fraud is prohibited. Say whatever you like in your speeches, and preach anything you like in your sermons, but stay away from politics." During the years that al-Wafd was in power, from 1942 to 1952, not a single incident occurred, not from the right wing or the left wing. Al-Nahhas was very careful about national unity and about strengthening national unity. In the parliamentary councils under the Wafd at least 20 Copts were elected by the people simply because they were nominated by the Wafd. The Wafd Party once nominated Butrus Hakim in the electoral district of al-Maraghah. Hakim came to me and asked me that he not be nominated in that district because there were candidates, Muslim elders, who were better qualified than he was. When I relayed Hakim's request to al-Nahhas, he turned it down and said, "Didn't he serve his country? Didn't he resist? Wasn't he subjected to homelessness? Wasn't he arrested, and wasn't he deprived of his property? Wasn't he put on trial by the British for Egypt?" I said yes he was. He said, "This is his right. I am not nominating him for his sake. I am testing the people because I want to wipe out intolerance and sectarianism. I want people to become accustomed to choose the right person who would serve his country."

These are some of the things that the Wafd Party will try to achieve: economic reform, national unity, political stability and many things that cannot come about unless [those in power] join hands with the Wafd.

[Question] If the Wafd Party resumes its political activity, would it agree to join a coalition government that would include all the parties, including the National Party?

[Answer] It is premature to talk about this matter. The Wafd Party has its opinions on this matter, but this is a matter that has to be considered at that time in the light of existing conditions. We would not refuse to serve Egypt in any area, but this will depend on the conditions under which such a necessity would develop. We cannot make a judgment about this beforehand.

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APPEARANCE OF IRREGULAR CULTURAL PUBLICATIONS EXAMINED

Riyadh AL-RIYAD in Arabic 8 Aug 83 p 16

[Text] During the past few years and since many of Egypt's cultural magazines have ceased publication for one reason or another, a new phenomenon has begun, growing on the periphery of cultural life in a modest way at first, but soon becoming an important element of cultural life and not merely a phenomenon existing on its periphery.

What we mean is the phenomenon of irregular publications, or what some have called "poor man's bulletins" or "stencil literature." One who casts a quick glance at the displays of Cairo's famous Madbuli bookstore is surprised to see dozens of irregular publications published in Cairo alone, aside from all the other publications published by various organizations in Alexandria, Dumyat, al-Suways and elsewhere.

One searching for the beginning of this phenomenon could not determine precisely when it began. Did it begin in June 1977 with the publication of IDA'AH 77 published by the young poets Hilmi Salim, Hasan Talab, Majid Yusuf, and others? Or did it begin with the publication by critic and artist Mahmud Baqshish of AFAQ 79 which was the first of the deluge of publications that flooded Cairo thereafter?

Regardless of when the beginning was, IDA'AH 77 has continued publication via traditional printing methods, whereas Baqshish, in late 1979, published his publication using the "photocopy" method, a method some have called the "stencil jump" because it is quick, inexpensive, and has a pleasant appearance.

Despite the accusation by some that these publications print literature that has been rejected by publishing houses and that they print the work of literary unknowns, a publication like AFAQ 79 was able, immediately after initial publication, to attract prominent names such as the famous playwright 'Ali Salim and well-known authors such as Yusuf al-Qa'id, Jamal al-Ghaytani, Mustafa Abu-al-Nasr, and Jamil 'Atiyah Ibrahim.

And it was not long before the late author Yahya al-Tahir 'Abdallah followed suit with the publication of KHATWAH in December 1980. Muhammad Ibrahim Mabruk then followed with the publication of AL-NADIM from Alexandria. And thus proliferated the various publications using the photocopy method: MISRIYAH, AL-NIDAH, KITABAT KURRASAT, ASWAT, ADAB AL-GHAD, and others.

The irregular publications, as defined by 'Abd-al-'Aziz Jamal al-Din who supervises publication of MISRIYAH, are those small pamphlets printed by the photocopy method that do not adhere to a specific periodicity but, rather, are printed when there is sufficient printable material or when there is sufficient money. The number of copies printed ranges from 500 to 1,000 and the goal is not to make a profit but, instead, to publish serious cultural material that stands out from that which is readily available. These publications are therefore, considered to be the arena for creative experimentation.

Despite that, these publications, in view of their limited publishing and printing capabilities, have remained out of reach of the true reader according to Dr Sayyid al-Bahrawi, who currently supervises the publication of KHATWAH. He says that they circulate within a limited group of Cairo's intelligentsia, 500 to 1,000 people, depending on the number of copies printed.

The question which arises today, in light of the new serious publications that have been published recently in Cairo such as IBDA', FUSUL, and AL-THAQAFAH AL-JADIDAH, is will the irregular publications maintain their presence in the face of these new magazines, particularly since many of their writers are publishing on the pages of these magazines, or will this phenomenon disappear or retreat once again to the literary periphery--the latter particularly because most of the groups that publish have broken up and some publications have actually been suspended, such as AFAQ 79. Also, the good publications are mixed in with the bad since the ease of printing allows the appearance of dozens of publications. Besides this, the most prominent personalities currently avoid writing for these publications.

The poet Hilmi Salim believes that, as a way out of this dilemma, those publications that have adopted similar creative philosophies must combine into one or two magazines with an elected board of directors. In so doing such a group would have greater capabilities in terms of printing and distribution and could therefore reach a wider base of readers.

'Abd-al-'Aziz Jamal al-Din, supervisor of MISRIYAH, and the ASWAT group see the necessity for maintaining the distinctiveness of the irregular publications and safeguarding them because they represent new directions in our cultural life and serve as special pulpits for unique and innovative experimentation.

In any case, the experiment of the sixties is pertinent to this phenomenon. While the sixties witnessed steadily increasing growth in the cultural movement in terms of innovation and publication, this movement suddenly disappeared merely because the authorities withdrew support for it. Then, after the

stagnation of the seventies which had settled over cultural life, this phenomenon emerged, the phenomenon of irregular publications that has evoked widely differing reactions and has spurred the stagnation on to movement. The publication of these new magazines was justified by the emergence of a new generation of writers and authors on the pages of these poor publications. From now on it will be difficult to depend solely on the magazines published by the state. It remains necessary to search for a freer and more independent form that allows greater room for discussion of problems and interests.

CSU: 4504/561

REDUCTIONS IN BUDGETS, INCREASES IN SALARIES REVIEWED

Rabat AL-'ALAM in Arabic 18 Jul 83 pp 1,3

[Article: "In a Review by the Finance Minister of the Amendment to the Finance Law for 1983 before the Chamber of Deputies: The Continued State of Drought and Recession in the International Market Make It Necessary To Re-evaluate the Situation and Adopt the Necessary Measures"]

[Text] On Monday, the Finance Committee of the Chamber of Deputies will continue its study of the draft decree of the law amending the Finance Law for 1983, in the light of the explanatory presentation which the minister of finance, Mr Abdellatif Jouahri, presented to the members of the committee on Thursday. Herewith is the text of the presentation which Mr Jouahri made:

In the name of God the most merciful and all-compassionate:

Mr Chairman:

Honored deputies:

Sirs:

It is a great honor for me to offer your venerable committee a presentation of the draft decree of a law related to the amendment of the Finance Law for 1983. The government's initiative in reviewing the data in the Finance Law, which was approved toward the end of last year, may basically be attributed to the rapid developments that have occurred in the domestic and international economic environment and their effect on our domestic situation, as will be explained. Although the developments in the international economic environment have not taken us totally by surprise, since some of their early signs started to appear late in 1982, signs to which I referred in my recent speech before the Chamber of Deputies, their negative effect on the factors of improvement has asserted itself more than had been expected.

The effect of this situation has not just been confined to our country; rather, it has also embraced most other countries, including those that are on the road to development and industrial countries, prompting the countries concerned to re-evaluate the situation and take the measures necessary to cope with its negative features.

For example, the expectations that were ratified at the end of last year as far as the Organization of Cooperation and Development countries went predicted that a growth of 2.5 percent in gross national product would probably occur. These expectations are now subject to review, since the rate of growth it will be possible to attain will most probably equal 12 percent [sic] overall, while this rate will not much exceed zero in some of those countries.

In another area, the developments which have occurred lately in the international arena as regards the oil market, which has been characterized by a decline in demand and drop in price, has had an extreme effect on the revenues of oil exporting countries, especially the fraternal Arab countries among them, which for the first time have encountered a deficit in their budgets, compelling them, in spite of the retrenchment to which some of their investment operations have been subjected, to resort to their hard currency savings to finance their development programs. This has caused the policy of financial cooperation which these countries are pursuing to experience a perceptible constriction. It is necessary to point out here most frankly that when the Finance Law for 1983 was prepared, it had been hoped, as was the case in past years, that exceptional aid would be obtained which would have the effect of facilitating the completion of the investment programs in the law.

In addition, the protective measures which the countries of the European economic group, which are considered among our most important direct partners, pursued in the economic, financial and commercial context, were not without their negative effects on broad sectors of activity, such as exports and tourist activity, as well as the remittances of our workers abroad, as a result of these developments, and this has had a direct impact on our hard currency reserves.

The Increase in the Price of the Dollar Has Made the Situation More Complicated

Making the situation more complicated was the fact that the price of the American dollar kept strengthening, rising from 6.20 dirhams in late December to 6.9 dirhams in late June, that is by about 11 percent.

This rise has had a direct reflection on the volume of our hard currency burdens, especially as regards our imports of basic materials and the expensing of the public debt. This quickly eliminated the positive effects which it had been anticipated would arise from the drop in the price of oil.

In view of all these factors, whose effects became aggravated in the first months of this year and were embodied in the rapid deterioration witnessed by our foreign currency reserves, the government resorted to adopting some precautionary measures to remedy the situation.

Restrictions on Imports

The first of these measures was embodied in the transfer of all the commodities included in List A of the general import program to List B, except for necessary materials for ordinary supplies, which the measure did not include. However, this measure was only a first step, which we sought to accompany by a parallel study to adjust the restrictions imposed on imports while taking

stock of the demands of the ordinary course of economic activity and the available hard currency resources. That prompted us to adopt successive decisions which had the goal of reducing these restrictions, in conjunction with the degree of priority that the various imported materials possessed. In addition, spare parts and primary materials were indeed reincorporated into List A, after less than 3 weeks and in about a month and a half, respectively.

In spite of the severity of the situation and its rapid evolution, I would like to stress that the government's initiatives in this field have in no way been marked by a character of improvisation but were rather the result of an analysis of the situation and a calculation of its consequences.

Combatting Smuggling

These measures could not have exerted their full effect if they had not been accompanied by parallel measures, measures at the same time characterized by strictness and decisiveness, to combat smuggling and prevent it from exploiting the situation and expanding the ground it covered, thus strengthening the distortion it caused not only in domestic economic activity but also in the hard currency of which we are in the greatest need, which smuggling enables to seep out of official, legitimate channels. On the other hand, the consequences of smuggling in the domestic arena on industrial development in particular is no secret, since our domestic products are not able to compete with smuggled goods, and that exposes our fledgling industry to annihilation and erodes the daily sustenance of a substantial number of working citizens.

In order to eliminate these effects, the government organized a broad campaign to confront this plague in all areas of the country. It is not unnatural, in a campaign of this magnitude, that some excesses will occur in the context of execution, and we have tried to rectify them as quickly as possible. In any event, the government is continuing to fight smuggling by directing itself to its sources, with all the severity required to extirpate it.

The Continuation of the Drought

In the domestic context, the situation has been characterized by the continued state of drought, whose effects have not been confined to crops but have extended beyond those into general economic activity, in view of the importance of the role the agricultural sector plays in this area, especially in the area of employment. They also have extended beyond this to the area of budget revenues.

These are the rapid developments which have occurred in the country's domestic and foreign situation.

It is plainly evident that in our current stage of economic growth, which is characterized by the fact that we have need for the outer world not just as regards basic consumer goods and some raw and semiprocessed primary materials but also as regards the necessary items of equipment to strengthen our productive capacity, and, on the other hand, by the need to defray exorbitant ongoing expenses in paying off our foreign debts, it will not be feasible to cover our needs unless we can save an adequate amount of hard currency in this

stage. Therefore, the depth of our problems lies in the balance of payments and our foreign currency reserves, without which it will not be possible to impart any practical content to our aspirations, especially in the realm of investment and development.

In view of the facts which have been presented above, it was mandatory that the government strive, in a manner concomitant with the precautionary measures, to cause a reduction in the influence of the elements which constitute the heaviest burden on our foreign and domestic accounts. There is no way, in order to reach this result, to avoid reviewing the volume of domestic consumption in the context of the public and private sectors both. The situation is primarily related to consumption in public administration, especially as concerns nonproductive spending, so that the magnitude of that may be in keeping with the need to reduce the balance of payments deficit and the deficit in the general budget of the government.

The Attainment of a Balance between Expenditures and Revenues

Mr Chairman;

Honored deputies;

Sirs:

The first operation which must be carried out as far as the general financial situation of the government is concerned, in order to rectify the disruptions which have occurred, manifests itself in the attempt to attain a balance between expenditures and revenues in the context of the ordinary budget, while waiting for the realization of savings which can be put aside to cover investment spending, if only in part.

In this direction the government, through the draft of the decree on the law amending the Finance Law for 1983, recommends a number of decisions which at the same time have the objective of putting pressure on expenditures and raising revenues.

The proposed measures as far as expenditures go revolve about three focal points:

The first focal point concerns expenditures on employees: 19,000 financial positions will be eliminated while care will be given to avoid as far as possible infringing on the productive sectors and the basic social sectors.

I would like to point out here that the number of positions created by Financial Law for 1983 comes to close to 44,000, aside from appointments, which have not been affected at all -- indeed, to the contrary, the government has committed itself to carrying out the requirements of the draft of the law that was recently approved by your venerable assembly in this category.

Avoiding Automobile Purchases

The second focal point concerns equipment and various other expenses.

We are aware that this category, more than any of the other chapters in the budget, is depended on to translate the policy of asceticism which the various public departments must follow into practice. In this regard, it is recommended that the purchase of automobiles be avoided in the case of the administrative departments. At the same time it is recommended that a return be made, with respect to the other expenses listed in this chapter, to the level of allocations provided in the 1982 budget. This means, that management will be obligated to guarantee that its ordinary progress continue, in spite of the actual decline that has occurred in the financial resources placed at its disposal as compared with last year, when inflation is taken into account. This will be feasible only if management seriously and sincerely tries to raise its output and to use all its resources with a great deal of asceticism and effectiveness, in order that this measure may correspond totally to the desire which your venerable assembly has long expressed as regards the method of management in government departments.

The third focal point is related to joint burdens, which have been subjected to a comprehensive survey with the objective of highlighting unspecified allocations. Adequate emphasis and review have been made with respect to them.

The Bulk of the Burden Will Lie on the Affluent Classes

This is as far as expenditures go. As regards revenues, the decisions which have been adopted have of course involved some tax considerations. However, the determination of these has been made with attention to serving two goals. the first goal is embodied in making the bulk of them lie on the affluent classes of citizens, without infringing on people with limited incomes or the contracting firms and organizations which play a part in economic activity and employment. The second goal is embodied in putting pressure on consumption, especially consumption of a luxury character, with the goal of reducing it.

Increasing National Solidarity Obligations

In this context lie the following measures:

It is a matter first of all of increasing national solidarity obligations, since in the current difficult situation it has become most necessary that practical meaning be given more than in the past to the notion of national solidarity, so that the burden of the government's expenses may be distributed in a manner that conforms with the citizens' material resources. Our recommendation arises from this premise; it is aimed on the one hand at setting the income subjected to that obligation at a minimum of 9,000 dirhams; this will result in the exemption of broad classes of citizens who up to now, no matter how small their incomes might be, have been subjected to this duty, and, on the other hand, at codifying a perceptible increase in the escalation of [the liability] as far as people with high incomes go, so that, for example, the

classes which contributed the maximum in this regard, that is, 8 days' wages, will have to give up a whole month's wages.

It is worth pointing out, in this context, that the agricultural sector has not been affected, in light of its particular situation, nor has the professional income sector, taking into account on the one hand the tax burden it bears by virtue of general laws, which has reached a substantial level, and on the other hand the government's encouragement of activities and organizations in its effort to preserve their general economic activity and the employment situation.

The matter is related, secondly, to the increase in the ordinary tax rate on products from 17 to 19 percent. The government has been concerned to make this decision selective in nature, and attention has also been given to avoid infringing as far as circumstances permit on the budgets of families with low incomes on the one hand and the productive system on the other. In actuality, the low rate of this tax applied on commodities which are widely consumed, such as grain, oils, medicines, school materials, and materials of a strategic nature such as fuel, water and transportation, will not be included in the amendment. In addition, the ultimate burden of this tax will not fall on contracting activities, in view of the opportunity available to them to regain the amounts they pay in this regard. If this decision has any effect on consumers, it will be restricted to luxury items only and will not infringe on ordinary consumption expenses, except at a level which is almost not worth mentioning. In any case, the parallel measures taken by the government, which I will address myself to later, will have the effect of improving the conditions of people with limited incomes.

500 Dirhams in Travel Charges

The third decision concerns the introduction of charges for traveling abroad. This recommended tax, which totals 500 dirhams in the case of all trips, will not be applied to our workers and students abroad, pilgrims, foreigners or the inhabitants of border areas. Nor will it be applied to government employees sent on fellowship abroad on official missions, bearing in mind that the government has taken a parallel measure aimed at reducing the number of these fellowships as far as possible, to economize in the allocations in the government's general budget and the hard currency these missions cost.

500 Million Dirhams in Burdens from Trips

The selective character of this decision is clearly apparent; it basically involves only trips of a voluntary nature, and at the same time has the effect of limiting the flow of hard currency abroad, since trips in 1982 constituted a balance of payments burden of about 500 million dirhams, and will help stimulate domestic economic activity by encouraging local tourist activity. This also means that the companies subject to Moroccan laws will be compelled to organize all their meetings inside the country.

In the field of revenue collection, the government is determined to take the necessary measures to rid itself of the debts it has vis-a-vis some

classes of people with obligations, such as people subject to the tax on the use of television sets and judiciary fees. It will also continue its efforts in an ongoing manner to eliminate postponement of taxes due, and also to combat fraud and evasion among taxpayers.

Thanks to these decrees and measures in the context of expenditures and revenues, it is expected that the current deficit will be reduced to a level no greater than 1.1 billion dirhams, as compared with 1.7 billion dirhams in 1982 and 2.7 billion dirhams in 1981.

Mr Chairman;

Honored deputies;

Sirs:

The endorsement of balance in the ordinary budget will without a doubt constitute a basic step in the program to rectify the general finances of the government, but the completion of the process will at the same time require a review of investment programs.

Here I would like once again to draw attention to the contents of my latest speech before your venerable assembly, where reference was made to the refusal to rule out the possibility of extending the period for the construction of our projects or making a new determination of priorities, since it was clear, from that time, that the completion of investments cannot be conceived of in isolation from the vicissitudes to which the foreign aid programs have been subject. In view of the developments which have occurred in this area on the stage, as I pointed out earlier, there is no longer any way to avoid reviewing the cover of the infrastructure budget and at the same time striving to impart to this budget the greatest possible effectiveness and payout.

The Refusal To Add to Indebtedness

In addition, in the review process which the government has carried out, the financial view has not predominated over other considerations and has not been given absolute priority; indeed, attention has been devoted primarily to the definition of integrated priorities which manifest themselves in responding to the basic needs of citizens, in the economic or social contexts, while devoting attention to specific criteria in the programming of projects which are essentially embodied in their ability to use and develop national resources and provide employment opportunities for citizens, as well as to improve the balance of hard currency, through reductions in expenditures or increases in revenues, while not ignoring projects which are most eligible for foreign financing on easy terms which do not add to our debt burden.

In this regard, I would like to express some fundamental observations.

Before all else it is necessary to stress that, contrary to what has been published in some newspapers and has been stated on some occasions, that this review was absolutely not the result of an impromptu act. Rather, it came about as the conclusion of a long process of hard labor, characterized by all

the necessary depth and seriousness, proceeding from a comprehensive survey of sectors and projects in the context of the criteria which were mentioned previously, in order to select the projects on which work is to continue. The other activities have not been abandoned, but have just been postponed until the circumstances which have forced us to review them change. If the situation improves and additional means of financing become available to us, there will be no objection to including new programs in the context of Finance Law for 1984 and starting work on them as soon as they are approved.

Here one must point out that it was in the government's power, from the purely legal angle, to rely on the last paragraph of Chapter 21 of Royal Edict 1/72/260 dated 18 September 1972, which is in effect the law regulating the financial situation, which states that it is sufficient to freeze the allocations concerned by decree of the prime minister, and that the government need not have recourse to these rules in order to reveal the desire to have the nation's deputies take part in this decisive stage of thinking and planning regarding the evaluation program, so that they may be totally informed of the details of the review process which has been started, and of the justifications for it and its consequences.

Maintaining the Government's Credibility

In the context of justifications, in addition to the statements I have already made regarding the general conditions of the country, it appears foolish to continue to commit oneself to a specific volume of investments when one realizes that we lack the foreign and even domestic financial facilities on some occasions to cover these commitments over reasonable periods, and that it is justifications of this sort that have led on some occasions to cases that are distinguished by an accumulation of delays in payment by the general treasury. This unfortunate situation, in reality, apart from purely legal obligations, presents the problem of the moral commitment of the government toward the contractors with whom it has made contracts, who have not hesitated to strengthen their material facilities and technical staffing to cope with their commitments vis-a-vis the work whose execution has been assigned to them, and now find themselves ultimately compelled to wait a long time before obtaining the rights from the general treasury that have been officially granted to them. This situation, if it continues, will have the effect of affecting the credibility of the government, although this credibility must be protected and strengthened at critical times, because the government is the last resort in such circumstances, more than at any other time.

In the context of consequences, one could say that substantial losses could arise from this process as far as the domestic economy goes in light of the reduction in the volume of investments.

One can deal with this pertinent question from the qualitative and the quantitative standpoints.

The Evolution of Investment Expenditures

From the quantitative standpoint, it is necessary to point out that the annual magnitude of public investment expenditures has evolved as follows since 1968:

In the period from 1968 to 1972, 1.08 billion dirhams.

In the period from 1973 to 1977, 6,112,000,000 dirhams.

In the period from 1978 to 1980, 8.07 billion dirhams.

In the period from 1981 to 1982, 10,048,000,000 dirhams.

In this regard, one must point out that the 1981-85 5-year plan stipulated, in Part One, regarding general perspectives and directives (Table Nine and Page 236), that the investment expenses related to the government budget, including national defense, would rise, in current prices, from 8.6 billion dirhams in 1981 to 12.5 billion dirhams in 1985, that is, by an increase of 9.9 percent a year. Thus the volume of actual expenditures recorded in the first 2 years of the plan is the exact equivalent of the volume of expenses which was supposed to have been realized only in the course of 5 years. However, in spite of the expected reduction in the amount of commitments in the case of 1983, the volume of expenses will stay at the level it reached in recent years.

In another area, in the framework of attention to the world of the village and to cope with the effects of the drought our country has experienced this year, the government, in accordance with Chapter 18 of the draft which has been presented for your review, recommends the establishment of a special fund to defray the costs of activities related to saving livestock and protecting it from the effects of such natural calamities as drought and floods and certain contagious diseases which attack them suddenly from time to time. These activities will be covered by receipts from a levy which will be imposed on animals slaughtered in supervised slaughterhouses, which will replace levies which were paid in the past to the account of the general government budget. In the same context, the government also intends to proceed to carry out major works which will be financed by the special fund to develop local societies.

From the standpoint of quality, making the government's commitments conform to available financial resources will have the effect of enabling the treasury to pay the obligations it owes on schedule, and consequently the contractors will be able to obtain the money owed them within reasonable periods; this will make it easy for them to invest this money in other workshops and therefore distribution will be strengthened and cash flow will be able to circulate at greater speed, which will help in the attainment of a more significant volume of transactions in a specific time frame.

Raising the Effective Payout

In another area, what the infrastructure budget will lack in terms of volume of allocations can be compensated for by raising the degree and the effectiveness of the payout, as far as the projects that are retained go, through adequate control over prices, a review of the method of preparing and carrying out projects and emphasis on preventing expenditures from being transferred abroad except within the narrowest limits.

The final observation I would like to make bears on the connection between the infrastructure budget and the operating budget, since one must not lose sight in this regard of the direct immediate repercussions on the operating budget, which must be provided with the wherewithal for its operation from the material and human standpoint. The fact is that there are projects which have been carried out in various sectors, but are still idle, if only in part, because they lack adequate allocations at the operating level.

In general, in spite of the reduction in the total volume of investments, the calculations which have been made recently in light of the new figures in the area of the infrastructure indicate that the growth in gross domestic product will be at an annual rate close to 4.5 percent, a rate which one can consider satisfactory if compared with the anticipated rate of growth in developing countries, which does not exceed 3.8 percent.

Strengthening Hard Currency Revenues

Mr Chairman:

Honored deputies:

Sirs:

The purpose behind the decisions and measures that have been adopted by the government in the context of the general government budget, as previously stated, is to put pressure on public and private consumption and consequently to reduce the volume of imports and the hard currency expenditures that they involve.

However, financial difficulties require that one adopt additional measures to strengthen the orientation to improve the foreign currency balances by strengthening our foreign currency receipts.

The encouragement of exports is paramount in this regard, since the studies that have been done in this field have underlined the fact that the broad scope that this sector may offer could constitute a broad base for the revival of our domestic economy and its liberation from the regression it might face in the current situation. These possibilities have not yet been exploited to a sufficient degree of effectiveness. The policy the government is intending to follow in this field revolves about four axes.

The first axis is represented by strengthening the forms of encouragement granted to this sector in accordance with the Finance Law for 1983, as regards the provision of insurance for exports, extending the benefits granted to export contracting work in accordance with the 1973 law, and increasing insurance against the consequences of fluctuations in the prices of foreign currency which has been in effect for some years through supplementary measures in the administrative and customs areas, which we will seek to put into practice as soon as possible.

The second axis is represented by the codification of new rules for dealing with countries with which we have a balance of trade deficit, and for

concentrating on the creation of organic links between our exports to these countries and our imports from them. We are resolutely determined to deal with all our partners, whoever they may be, with all the strictness that is necessary to protect the country's interests as fully as possible.

Reviewing the Policy of Protecting the Domestic Market

The third axis is represented by a review of the policy of protecting the domestic market, which benefits some organizations which find in our country broad scope to promote their products without exerting sufficient effort to bring the country's added value to the requisite level or trying to expand the context of their foreign marketing with the objective of recouping some of the deficit they cause in the balance of trade.

The fourth and final axis is represented by the opening of new markets for our products and contracting activities in various sectors, in view of the obstacles we confront in traditional markets as a result of protective policy, which has started to be intensified by our direct partners and inhibits the prospects for great expansion within these markets. There is no doubt that if there is sincere determination on the part of businessmen and industrialists, it will be possible substantially to expand the channels of our dealings with the foreign world.

The administration, for its part, is totally prepared to grant the facilities required in this regard, especially since the system of economic counsellors in our embassies abroad has started to play its part and covering the risks of discovering foreign markets has become more secure.

Encouraging Remittances from Our Workers abroad

While the broad hopes attached to the expansion of our exports enjoy primary attention, the remittances of our workers abroad also are of maximum importance in this regard. Therefore, the government is determined to continue with the policy of encouragement which it is following on behalf of this group of citizens, in spite of the difficulties that have resulted from the recent drop in the rates of currencies of some countries in which we have important expatriate communities. In this regard, the protective measures the government adopted in the context of Finance Law for 1983 to improve these workers' conditions, through new measures which a national committee containing all departments concerned with workers' affairs has been engrossed in preparing, will be strengthened.

These measures include, in particular, obtaining the best circumstances for accepting workers during the unemployment season which we are approaching, arranging their relations with the various branches of the administration, especially the Customs Department and the Department of National Security, and attention to their children's affairs in the realm of education and culture with the goal of maintaining the spiritual bonds that link them with their homeland. One can address oneself in greater detail to this issue through discussions in your venerable committee.

The third element which also is receiving great attention in this sphere is embodied by tourist activity. This attention is especially manifest in the strengthening of our publicity efforts abroad and in the intensification of contacts with officials in some countries, especially the countries which constitute the greatest source of tourists to our country, with the goal of seeking ways and means to avoid the negative effects imparted by the measures taken by them.

Mr Chairman:

Honored deputies:

Sirs:

These are the main features of the decisions and measures the government is intending to carry out in the context of the decree on the law amending the Finance Law for 1983. These decisions and measures constitute a first step, which we consider to be decisive, in the direction of rectifying the disruptions and creating suitable circumstances for an economic and social takeoff on sounder bases.

We will not deceive ourselves by ignoring the negative effects which might arise from these decisions. Such effects are inevitable, but one must insist that the government, without exaggerating the situation more than necessary, has been concerned at the same time to take supplementary measures which have the goal of alleviating the impact of these decisions as much as possible on the employment situation and the standard of living of the poorer classes of citizens.

Narrowing the Gap between the Rise in Prices and Wages

Thus the government has decided to increase the minimum wage (the SMIC and SMAC) by 20 percent. Thus the gap between the evolution in the minimum wage and the evolution of the cost of living has increased in the past 7 years, since the cost of living indices rose between 1976 and 1982 from 142.9 to 260.66, that is, by a cumulative increase of 82.4 percent, or an annual increase of 10.5 percent, while the SMIC rose by 116 percent in all or 13.7 percent a year, and the SMAC by 112 percent in all or 13.3 percent a year.

Reviewing the System of Setting Industrial Prices

In another area, in addition to the points mentioned previously regarding the grant of maximum priority to projects which will employ the greatest amount of manpower and domestic material, and also regarding the stipulated initiatives in the framework of the struggle against the effects of the drought, one must observe that in spite of the difficult circumstances, we have retained the encouragements granted in accordance with the investment laws, and the increase in pressure on the collection of taxes on organizations and contractors has not stopped, thus enabling the productive sectors to continue their normal progress. Indeed, the government, out of its concern to encourage the stimulation of commercial and industrial activity, is thinking of reviewing the system of setting prices with respect to industrial goods to make this system

more in keeping with the new circumstances of the domestic economy. In addition, expanding the export sector will open new scope for the growth of economic activity.

Terms for the Acquisition of Government Apartments

As the government had previously presented your venerable assembly with the draft of a law to reform the retirement system which has the goal of narrowing the gap between the wages employees receive while engaged in their duties and the amount of the pension they receive on being transferred to retirement, in spite of the additional costs which the general budget will defray as a result of this measure, it will also, in the context of measures of a social character, permit employees living in apartments owned by the government to obtain them on carefully studied terms.

With respect to peasants, the facilities that have been granted to them in the past 2 years, in the context of the battle against the effects of drought, in the framework of the agricultural tax and the extension of the term of the loans granted them by the National Fund for Agricultural Loans, will continue to be in effect. The provision of the market with adequate amounts of food-stuffs allocated to livestock, such as barley, corn and hay, will continue to be assured, and in addition the areas that have been the most harmed will be supplied with water by tank trucks. Peasants dealing with the National Fund for Agricultural Loans will also be exempted from stamp obligations.

Cleaning up the Administrative System

These decisions and measures will not be complete and effective if they are not accompanied by a broad, bold operation to clean up the administrative system, which constitutes the essential instrument for carrying out all the policies the government embraces, and good policies cannot be separated from the good instruments which are required to carry them out. Therefore the government will not hesitate to take the necessary decisions to reach this goal.

Mr Chairman:

Honored deputies:

Sirs:

In the difficult, delicate circumstances our country is going through, which require selfreliance more than at any time in the past, in view of the prevailing situation in the international context, there is no longer room to exchange blame or enter into fruitless analyses and arguments. In fact, the situation makes it mandatory that there be consensus on goals and even on the ways and means that will guarantee that our ship will be brought to safe land.

This is because unanimity is to be considered a basic condition for making all sound policies a success and this requires that efforts be joined by the government and by the citizens, proceeding by the nature of the case from the conviction that the situation is not so grave that it makes any remedy impossible.

This will not come about unless all peripheral considerations are put to the side, and unless one rally under the true national banner, be sincere to the nation, repudiate all selfish personal interests and in the current conditions, more than at any time in the past, possess the characteristics of intellectual, moral and material probity.

We are certain that it will not be beyond the power of the nation's deputies who are assembled in this hall, who represent the citizens in their various classes and orientations, to go beyond the differences in their analyses and views of matters in order to agree to an integrated program which will have the effect of realizing the necessary conditions to enable our country to transcend the current crisis, so that we can make our enemies who are still lying in wait for us in various areas miss the opportunity to deceive our country. The government, which has presented specific recommendations in this regard, is anticipating that these recommendations will be enriched and enhanced by the discussions in your venerable committee.

Thus these discussions will be a new occasion for asserting fruitful cooperation between the legislative and executive powers and for implanting the experience of democracy in this country, under the lofty oversight of his majesty, the shepherd of the nation and guarantor of its unity. Peace and God's blessings be with you.

11887

CSO: 4504/489

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET BILL, OTHER FISCAL MEASURES DISCUSSED

Text of Budget Bill

Tunis LE TEMPS in French 24 Jul 83 p 4

[Text] The Chamber of Deputies will meet in plenary session, the last of the year, next Tuesday. The deputies will undertake a study of the draft supplementary budget law for the 1983 fiscal year. The following is the draft which will be submitted for approval by the deputies.

Article 1. The provisions of Article 2 of Law No 82-91 dated 31 December 1982 setting forth the Budget Law for the 1983 fiscal year are amended as follows:

Article 2 (new)

The maximum amount of credit assignable to general state budget expenditures is established for the 1983 fiscal year at 1,753,000,000 dinars, distributed as follows:

--960,000,000 dinars for current state expenditures and

--793,000,000 dinars for state investment expenditures (payment credits).

This makes a total of 1,753,000,000 dinars.

Part One of the Regular Budget (Title I)

Chapter One--General Provisions

Article 2. The total amount of various taxes, duties, rates, income and revenue for which amended Table B, appended hereto, provides, collection of which is authorized for inclusion in the appended budgets by Law No 82-91 dated 31 December 1982 setting forth the Budget Law for the 1983 fiscal period, is reduced from 80,195,000 dinars to 80,127,000 dinars.

Article 3. In accordance with Table C appended hereto, the distribution of the maximum amount of credits assignable for current state expenditures for the 1983 fiscal year, established at 41,420,000,000 dinars, in accordance with Article 6 of Law No 82-91 dated 31 December 1982 setting forth the Budget Law for the 1982 fiscal year, is amended.

Article 4. The maximum amount of credits assignable to current service expenditures of the state of an industrial and commercial nature which are provided with a supplementary budget for the 1983 fiscal year is reduced from 80,193,000 dinars to 80,137,000 dinars.

This credit is distributed by part and by chapter in accordance with the amended Table D appended hereto.

Article 5. The income and expenditures of the public establishments whose budgets are linked by order to the state budget are reduced from 184,285,000 dinars to 115,317,000 dinars, in accordance with the amended Table B attached hereto.

Article 6. The income and expenditures of the public establishments whose budgets are linked with the departments provided with appended budgets are established at 1,593,000 dinars for the 1983 fiscal year, in accordance with Table E-b appended hereto.

Article 7. Article 47, 52, 53 and 56 of Law No 82-91 dated 31 December 1982 setting forth the Budget Law for the 1983 fiscal period are amended as follows:

Article 47 (new). The issuance by district tax collectors of extracts or registered copies to one of the parties to a contract or their authorized agents will be effected against collection of a search fee of 1 dinar per page for inclusion in the state budget.

Article 52. Line 6 of the paragraph of Article 3b added by Article 52 of Law No 82-91 dated 31 December 1982 setting forth the Budget Law for the 1983 fiscal year to Law No 62-72 dated 31 December 1962 establishing a single income statement is abrogated.

Article 53 (new). Article 17 (new) of Law No 62-72 dated 31 December 1962 establishing a single income statement as modified by Article 53 of Law 82-91 dated 31 December 1982 setting forth the Budget Law for the 1983 fiscal year is abrogated and replaced by the following provisions.

Article 17 (new). Any violation of failure to observe the provisions of this law, other than those for which the penalties are especially provided, will be punishable by a fiscal fine collectible from the taxpayer or his heirs and equal to

--50 dinars for each asset acquired and not declared, and

--10 percent of the taxable income from each inherited item undeclared.

Article 56 (new). Failure to file the opening statement within the period prescribed for the individuals covered by the first article of the Patent Code and the tax on noncommercial professional profits will entail, in addition to the fiscal penalties provided for such cases, the filing of an official report and the payment of a penal fine of 20 dinars.

Article 8. Articles 60, 61, 62, 63, 64 and 66 of Law No 82-91 dated 31 December 1982 setting forth the Budget Law for the 1983 fiscal period are abrogated.

Article 9. The penalties pertaining to monies owed to the state, whatever the amount, shown on the accounting books for each public department as of 31 December 1982 will be entirely and automatically canceled for debtors who have, prior to 1 October 1982, paid at least 20 percent of the amount of the simple taxes payable or remaining payable for all of the articles as of 31 December 1982, when the payment of the balance of the simple taxes still owing as of 20/9/83 and the back interest pertaining thereto is made in a maximum of two equal payments, the first being due prior to 1 January 1984 and the second prior to 1 July 1984.

Article 10. The provisions of the preceding article are applicable under the same conditions to the penalties pertaining to tax sums due the state, whatever the amount, if the due date was prior to 1 January 1983 and the debt is established between that date and 30 September 1983.

Article 11. Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 20b of the decree dated 29 December 1955 establishing a tax on production, a tax on consumption and a tax on services rendered, producers are authorized to deduct the amount of the consumption tax applied to purchases from other producers or imports they themselves have made and affecting goods which have been exempted from the consumption tax pursuant to the provisions of Article 41 of Law 82-91 dated 31 December 1982 setting forth the Budget Law for the 1983 fiscal year, and which they had in stock as of 31/12/82.

Article 12. Line 7 of the first paragraph of Article 57 of Law No 82-91 dated 31/12/82 setting forth the Budget Law for the 1983 fiscal year is amended as follows:

--35 percent, when the taxes due are the result of acceptance following arbitrary assessment or a decision by the special arbitrary assessment office.

--Line 8 of paragraph 1 of Article 57 referred to above is abrogated.

Article 13. The application of the provisions set forth in Articles 7, 8, 9 and 10 of this law will not justify any restitution.

Article 14. Nos 22 and 23 of the rate schedule appended to the decree dated 19 April 1912, as amended by Article 13 of Law No 68-41 dated 31 December 1968, are amended as follows.

Chapter Three--Miscellaneous Provisions--Common Funds

Article 15. The total credit allocated for the 1983 fiscal year to Chapter VIII, Budget of the Ministry of Plan and Finance, Section III: Common Funds, Article 92, under the item "Miscellaneous Expenditures," is increased from 41,100,000 dinars to 72,100,000 dinars. This credit will be distributed in

the course of administration by decree among the various departments and related budgets of the RTT [Tunisian Radio and Television] and the telecasting agencies.

Part Two

Title II--Equipment Budget

Article 16. The total amount of the program credits for the state and state departments assigned related budgets for the 1983 fiscal year is reduced from 1,077,246,600 dinars to 1,076,743,600 dinars.

This credit will be distributed by program and project in accordance with Table F amended and appended to the present law.

Article 17. The resources to be assigned for capital expenditures from the budgets of the state and state departments provided with related budgets for the year 1983 are reduced from 799,000,000 dinars to 793,000,000 dinars, in accordance with Table G, amended and appended to this law.

Article 18. The maximum credit and payment commitments for capital expenditures from the budget of the state and state departments provided with related budgets for the 1983 fiscal year are reduced as follows:

--commitment credit, from 1,035,000,000 dinars to 1,032,837,000 dinars, and

--payment credit, from 799,000,000 dinars to 793,000,000 dinars.

This credit will be distributed by part and paragraph in accordance with Table H, amended and appended to this law.

Numbers	Nature of the Agreement and Change	Basis of the Tax	Rate	Comments
22 and 23 (new)	Awards to lowest bidders and contracts for construction, repair, maintenance, supplies, equipment and all other movable property subject to estimate and not involving sales.*	Stated price or assessment of items subject to estimate.	2.20	*However: --contracts for studies and --contracts with subcontractors resulting from a main registered contract are only subject to the fixed tax applying to innominate contracts (No 98 in the rate schedule), on condition that these contracts bear the registration reference of the main contract.

Budget Bill Passes

Tunis LE TEMPS in French 27 Jul 83 p 5

[Text] (TAP)--The Chamber of Deputies met in plenary session yesterday with Mr Mahmoud Messaadi, president of the chamber, presiding, and with Prime Minister Mohamed Mzali, Minister of Finance Salah Ben M'Barka, Minister of Plan Ismail Khelil, and Minister of Information Abderrazak Kefi in attendance.

The session was devoted to a study of the draft supplementary budget law for the year 1983.

The chamber first of all approved two draft laws studied during an earlier session.

The chamber then discussed and unanimously adopted, with a single abstention, the draft supplementary budget law for the 1983 fiscal year.

This bill was designed to stimulate production and to cover the wage increases effected this year. The draft provides that the adjustment of the budget law referred to in no way changes the essential aspects of tax reform planned within the framework of the Fifth and Sixth Plans.

With regard to the steps approved, they include:

- elimination of the subsidy included under Title I to the benefit of the compensation fund, and

- a reduction in the credit assigned for administrative expenditures (7 million dinars) and equipment (14 million dinars).

In the drafting of these measures, the need to avoid recourse to fiscal pressure and borrowing was borne in mind.

Compensation Fund and Fiscal Measures

Where the compensation fund is concerned, its requirements for the year 1983 were assessed at 171.5 million dinars, as compared to income of 150 million dinars, including 20 million from the regular state budget, with an estimated deficit of 21.5 million dinars. It will be covered either by a reduction in the support fund, or by appropriate supplementary measures to be adopted at the proper time.

What is proposed in the draft supplementary budget law is the elimination of the subsidy provided by the regular state budget, and its replacement from the following resources:

- utilization of 14 million dinars, the amount of the compensation fund balance during the period from the end of 1982 to 1983, and

- six million dinars taken from income obtained from imposition of a fiscal regime on the tobacco sector.

Where fiscal measures are concerned, they are designed among other things to:

- reduce the amount of fees charged for obtaining extracts and certified copies;
- simplify the content of the single income declaration;
- reduce the fines to be paid by those subject to the license tax and failing to file statements within the prescribed period;
- eliminate the closing of premises as a recourse;
- revise the period at the end of which back interest due for late payment of accumulated taxes begins to be charged; and
- cancel the provisions pertaining to invoices and crossed checks.

The deputies participating in the debate expressed their concern about the political aspect of the amendment of the supplementary budget law.

On this subject, they noted that the amendment, contrary to the initial formulation of the budget law, takes the human factor into account.

They stressed that "this bears witness to the socialist and humanitarian policy of the Bourguiba regime, which has always been able to contribute the necessary balance whenever difficulties were encountered in the implementation of the socioeconomic options and in getting them accepted by the citizens."

The deputies, while expressing their satisfaction with the efforts put forth by the ministries with a view to limiting administrative expenditures, appealed for more cooperation between the legislative and executive branches. They urged more serious consideration of their suggestions and better media coverage of their debates.

An End to Improvisation

The deputies asked for clarification on a number of issues, including:

- the steps the government will take to strengthen compensation fund resources;
- the limits on the foreign indebtedness of the country;
- the impact of the amendment of the 1983 budget law on national production.

Moreover, the deputies suggested long-term measures to forestall any socioeconomic difficulty or crisis.

Among these were:

- elimination of improvisation and study in depth of any reform;
- the drafting of a contractual policy for the remaining years of the Sixth Plan period of a sort to favor social peace and to limit, under the best possible conditions, the negative effects of the world economic recession; and
- organization of a national campaign to increase production and improve productivity.

In his response to the various statements made, Minister of Finance Salah Ben M'Barka began by expressing the desire of the government to pursue and consolidate the dialogue between the executive and the legislative branches.

With regard to the series of measures contained in the draft supplementary budget law, Mr Salah Ben M'Barka said that they have two aspects, one financial and one social. Pertaining to the first, the minister stressed that the measures were adopted within the framework of the draft supplementary budget law because of various factors which have developed recently, such as the increase in wages, the drought which drastically limited production, and the effects of the decisions approved with a view to consolidating the creation of new jobs. These various factors, Mr M'Barka said, led to additional expenditures of about 41 million dinars, including 33 million dinars under Title I and 8 million under Title II. In order to cover these expenditures, the minister of finance emphasized, the government has opted for the most difficult solution, involving the limitation of public expenditures, in particular on government employees, without however threatening development projects, having recourse to foreign indebtedness, or increasing fiscal pressure.

Only 14 million dinars were taken from the investment budget, because of the delay seen in the implementation of certain studies pertaining to various projects.

A Mysterious Realm

Going on to answer questions raised in each of the deputies' speeches, Mr Salah M'Barka admitted that the fiscal sector remains, despite all popularization efforts, a mysterious realm, subject to various interpretations. He stressed that further efforts will be made to standardize tax evaluation criteria and to make it easier for taxpayers to carry out this duty.

In connection with the tax courts, the minister of finance added that direct taxes, which a few years ago accounted for 18 percent of the state income, today account for nearly 26 percent. Help will be given in the future by the battle against tax evasion.

Mr Salah Ben M'Barka made a point of explaining, moreover, that the amendment of the budget law for the 1983 fiscal year should not be regarded as laxity on the part of the government, but rather reflects its continuing desire to promulgate laws which are applicable but noncoercive.

"No tax reform can allow each citizen to benefit from his savings unless it is imbued with realism," Mr Salah Ben M'Barka said further.

When he spoke, Minister of Plan Ismail Khelil voiced the desire of his department to collaborate with the Chamber of Deputies such as to enable its members to accomplish their task in the best possible way.

On the subject of taxation and foreign indebtedness, Mr Ismail Khelil stressed that greater fiscal pressure has been seen to date, and that it is not desirable to increase this pressure, which will reach 29.1 percent by the end of the present year.

On the other hand, Mr Ismail Khelil warned against easy and excessive recourse to foreign indebtedness, saying that the use of foreign capital is likely to come to nearly 2,380,000,000 dinars, or 44 percent of the gross domestic product, by the end of this year. As to repayment of this debt, it will cost 365,000,000 dinars, or 16.5 percent of the current income.

Mr Ismail Khelil stressed in this connection that two basic factors affected the refloating of the foreign debt.

The first has to do with the fluctuation of the main foreign currencies and the increase in the dollar and other exchange currency.

The second factor has to do with the decline in production, for which the increase did not exceed 1 percent last year.

It is expected that the rate of increase in the gross domestic product will reach 4.5 percent.

Given these two factors, the minister of plan added, the government adopted the firm decision not to have recourse to foreign indebtedness, but instead to limit certain expenditures.

Concerning jobs, Mr Ismail Khelil said that in the light of the recent census of the population taken by the National Institute of Statistics in 1980, it was established that the number of unemployed between the ages of 18 and 59 came to 170,000 persons, or 11 percent of the active population.

The regional distribution of these employed persons, the minister of plan added, shows an imbalance to the detriment of the interior regions and the western part of the country.

With regard to the delays and lags in the implementation seen in certain projects, the minister of plan explained that an office whose task is to oversee execution has become necessary, in view of the additional expenditures and imbalances in the evaluation of the plans causing the delay in the implementation and achievement of the projects.

SOLUTION TO SAHARAN CONFLICT DISCUSSED

Paris LE MONDE in French 23 Jul 83 pp 1, 3

[Article by Paul Balta: "The Saharan Conflict--How To Get Rid of It?"]

[Text] That Hassan II and Chadli Bendjedid want to put an end to the Saharan conflict is obvious. That they are having great difficulty in finding a solution is equally so. Since Rabat proclaimed the Moroccan nature of the "Saharan provinces" invaded by the Royal Armed Forces (FAR) in November 1975, and since Algiers has recognized the Saharan Democratic Arab Republic (SDAR) proclaimed on 28 February 1976, the successor to Boumedienne and his royal neighbor cannot reverse themselves overnight. This is particularly difficult since their initial positions were very distant and forced them to deal craftily with their extremists.

And so it is that Hassan II, at grips with the political parties, has refused to allow his ministers to meet again with the Saharan leaders, at the risk of blocking the process conceived by the OAU last June. In fact, the organization approved a resolution "urging to the parties to the conflict--the Kingdom of Morocco and the Polisario Front--to undertake direct negotiations" with a view to bringing about a cease-fire and the holding of a referendum for self-determination before the end of the year. In addition, it appointed an implementing committee to oversee the proper application of this text. The committee, which has full powers, was to have met on 20 July, but could not do so because of the defection of the Moroccans.

Algiers and Rabat must, in addition, take into account the interests and ambitions of their neighbors and allies intervening in the matter. First of all, there is the Polisario Front, which has no intention at all of making a sacrifice on the altar of the Great Maghreb, much less letting itself be ruined. Then there is Mauritania, the feeble link in the region, which, to use an expression ascribed to Hassan II, does not want "Morocco and Algeria to enjoy the feast of reconciliation at its expense."

A supporter of the Saharans, who are Moors, the dominant ethnic group in Mauritania, President Khouna Ould Haidalla would prefer the establishment of an independent state on the frontiers of the old Spanish colony, in a desire for equity, but also out of realism: he fears the appetites of the Polisario warriors who would be deprived of their land, and would prefer that the SDAR serve as a "buffer zone" against the powerful neighbor to the north. In

fact, he suspects that Rabat is not yet free of its "expansionist demons," and has not definitively renounced the dream of integrating Nouakchott in the "Greater Morocco" so dear to the late Allal El Bassi.

President of Senegal Abdou Diouf, a friend of Morocco, is asserting himself more and more as a great chief of state, but he will have to turn to unpopular measures to deal with one of the most serious economic crises his country has seen. Thus he would prefer to function in a peaceful environment. Less involved on the side of Hassan II than his predecessor, Mr L. Senghor, and unlike him he is not seeking to incite the black Africans in the southern part of Mauritania against the Moors at the risk of causing the country to explode. In addition, he wants both to safeguard the OAU and to see a negotiated solution to the Saharan conflict prevail.

Thus it is no accident that he took the risk of displeasing Rabat by welcoming to Addis Ababa President Mohamed Abdelaziz of the SDAR and, with his Mauritanian and Ethiopian colleagues, drafting the resolution adopted at the OAU summit meeting.

Tunisia, which is benefitting from its reconciliation with Algeria on all levels, now feels less confident about the designs--unitarian or subversive--of Libya, and more inclined to push Morocco into accepting a compromise with the Polisario Front in order to encourage the emergence of a Greater Maghrib, for which it has never ceased to pray. It knows, at the outset, as do all of the states involved, that the referendum on self-determination in the Western Sahara is very likely not to take place or to have no meaning unless it is the culmination of direct negotiations between the belligerent parties.

Nor can anyone be unaware either that Colonel Qadhdhafi is ready to sow confusion in order to settle his accounts. For example, did he not pardon President Haideria for having failed to rubber-stamp the unity between Libya and Mauritania promised in Tripoli at the beginning of 1982 by the prime minister of the latter, Mr Bneijara, who is today in prison? It is said in Nouakchott that the "guide of the Libyan revolution" attempted, moreover, on two occasions to persuade former president Ould Daddah, "who refused," it is stressed, to seize power again with the aid of Tripoli. It is to combat such maneuvers and to keep leaders loyal to it at the head of the Saharan movement that Algeria has gone against the Saharan, indeed the African, ambitions of its Libyan "ally."

In visiting Rabat again recently, as he had not done since 1969, Colonel Qadhdhafi hoped to create some concern on the part of the Polisario Front, which did not support him to the end in his dispute to win the presidency of the OAU. He also wanted to show Algiers that he still holds all the trumps in the game in the Maghreb, and that he too, in order to defend his interests, can embarrass the allies he believes have deceived him, going so far as to implement policies which are seemingly contradictory but are all in the service of his dream of a "United States of the Sahara." These policies include discussions with Hassan II and urging the Saharans to be intransigent in negotiations, or urging them to join with Mauritania, or even to seize power in Nouakchott.

The Role of Algiers

In this contest of rare complexity in which all of the threads are tangled and low blows are frequent, the role of Algeria nonetheless remains decisive. More than any other state, it could equally well promote peace or revive the war. It has just proved this by giving the green light, at least implicitly, for the Lemsiyed attack by the Polisario Front, after a period of calm of more than 18 months. In the current stage, with no guarantee that it will be the last, Morocco is likely to be caught in the peace trap, since the OAU resolution reduces its room for maneuvering.

President Chadli had always set as a condition for the meeting with Hassan II which took place last 26 February the recognition of the Polisario Front by the sovereign, in one way or another. This was why, shortly after this tete-a-tete which appeared to have occurred without any prior conditions, both the Algerians and the Saharans made a point of letting it be known that a "secret meeting" had indeed been held in Algiers between the leaders of the Front and a Moroccan delegation including Minister of Foreign Affairs Boucetta, who is also head of the Istiqlal, which advocates the "Greater Morocco," Minister of Interior Driss Basri, and royal adviser Reda Guedira.

Thus by winning this satisfaction in principle and by proclaiming that no conflict existed with Morocco, with which it had normalized relations, Algeria left the Moroccans and the Saharans face to face as the sole belligerent parties, a situation confirmed by the OAU. If negotiations presuming mutual concessions took place, what did they yield in exchange? In a first phase, they may have made it obvious that after the fall of Guelta Zemmour in the southern part of the Western Sahara in October of 1981, it was possible to persuade the Polisario Front not to undertake any broad-scale attack. Designed to favor a negotiated settlement, this period of peace also served the purpose of calming the United States and limiting the massive aid it had granted Morocco after Guelta Zemmour made use of Soviet tanks and rockets obtained from Libya.

Without a doubt the SDAR was also persuaded to abstain from participation in the OAU summit meeting in exchange for official recognition of the Polisario Front as an interlocutor. Finally, Algeria has always said that it intervened between the two negotiating parties in order to encourage a compromise, letting it be understood that it made an effort to persuade the Saharans to be "realistic." But, on pain of betraying the principles they defend and losing all credibility in the Third World, the Algerians must save face and cannot deliver a "stab in the back" to the Polisario Front. Nor do the Algerians lack means of pressure, one of them being pointing to the errors committed by the leadership at the instigation of Libya.

At the heart of these criticisms is the proclamation of the Saharan republic as a state itself. This has been a singular hindrance to Algerian diplomacy for 7 years now. In fact, the Algerians had persuaded the Liberation Committee of the OAU, meeting in Maputo, to make a unanimous recommendation for the recognition of the Polisario Front as a liberation movement. This recommendation was to be endorsed by a comfortable majority in the Council of Ministers of the organization meeting in Addis Ababa on 26-28 February 1976.

Earlier, Spain had announced that it would withdraw from the Western Sahara on that date, and that it would turn over the administration, but not sovereignty, of the territory to Morocco and Mauritania.

It was to fill the "legal void" resulting from this withdrawal that the Saharan leaders wanted to proclaim the SDAR. Boumedienne is said to have sent two emissaries to them then,* to issue a warning about the undesirable aspects of a "provisional government" prematurely established, and to ask them in any case to postpone their decision until the Front was recognized by the OAU. The proclamation of the SDAR had blocked this process, to the great satisfaction of the Moroccans who feared it, and it was not until 22 February 1982 that the "51st State" was accepted for membership in the OAU, under highly controversial circumstances. In private, the Algerian leaders did not fail to note that Hassan II had profited from this time lag to gain a broader international hearing and to consolidate his grip on the "useful triangle."

In public, the Algerians unanimously defend a position based on principle. In private, however, the officials are divided into two factions. The adherents of the first believe that the king has no option but to conclude the conflict and to encourage cooperation in the Maghreb in order to save his throne by correcting an economic and financial situation which has over the years become intolerable. They recall that Saudi Arabia, the kingdom's main financial backer, has more limited assets available, and they stress that they persuaded the Polisario Front to grant Rabat substantial advantages in the phosphate and fishing sectors.

Algeria, for its part, would throw into the pot the gas pipeline from the west. Instead of a direct link with Spain through the Mediterranean, a costly solution favored by the American Bechtel firm, entrusted with the studies formerly headed by American Secretary of State Shultz, this pipeline would pass through Morocco, so that it could benefit, just like Tunisia, thanks to the pipeline from the east, from royalties in foreign exchange and gas at an advantageous price. The Moroccans could also be involved in the exploitation of iron at Gara Djebilet, in the southern part of Algeria, and other projects.

The adherents of the second faction, however, believe that these advantages are likely to be far off, and that the king needs immediate concrete results if he is to discharge ballast. Since Hassan II said on 22 February: "Leave me the flag and the stamp, and all the rest is negotiable," they are thinking of a solution of the South-Sudan type which enabled the Anya-Nya to win broad autonomy and retain their own army. An agreement of the same sort might even, they add, recognize the Saharans' "right to secession." However, at a time when President Nemeiry is questioning the advantages granted to the Anya-Nya again, one can hardly see how the Saharans could be tempted by such a solution. It would presume in addition direct negotiations, and Hassan II has just said that he does not want this. One might finally wonder what real profit Algeria would derive from such an arrangement, unless it were a

* Col Slimane Hoffman and Mr Hadj Yala, presently minister of interior.

question of a tactical maneuver designed to tempt the Moroccans. However, the fact alone that the Algerian officials could conceive of such a compromise is in itself a new factor.

In Morocco too, behind a unanimous facade, the positions are less fixed than they would appear to be. It is true that the heads of the political parties are still defending an all-or-nothing policy with equal vigor. But the people are tired of putting up with austerity for "a few acres of sand" and the majority of the businessmen deplore the fact that the millions "swallowed up by the desert" were not invested in the "useful Morocco." Finally, some politicians who prefer to remain anonymous are asking if it is not time, since the king has recreated unity on the basis of his person, to develop a solution involving a retreat so as to guarantee perpetuity for the throne. But what would the attitude of the army be then? Would it not, as a final recourse, agree to sharing such as to keep the "useful triangle" for Morocco, in the exploitation of which an SDAR established on the rest of the territory might be associated?

Six weeks after the OAU summit meeting, the situation between Algeria and Morocco again seems to be at a standstill, while the Polisario Front is calling upon Africa to bear witness to its good will and to the evasiveness of Rabat. "It only remains for the OAU to reach the inevitable conclusions. Either it resigns itself or else it will assume its responsibilities and regard Morocco as a rebel against its resolutions," Mr Ibrahim Hakim, the Saharan "minister" of foreign affairs has stated. Henceforth the hope of emerging from the impasse rests with the implementation committee, which can and must "take all the necessary steps, with the participation of the United Nations, to guarantee the proper application" of the resolution approved in Addis Ababa. The Chinese puzzle of the Sahara is far from resolved.

Appended Note

Mr Fadel Ismail, the representative of the Polisario Front in Paris, stated in a communique released for publication on Wednesday, 20 July, that "for the first time, Gazelle helicopters equipped with Hot antitank missiles and a portion of the 300 VAB armored vehicles recently delivered (in April) to Morocco by France made their appearance during the Lemsiyed battles." Mr Ismail expressed surprise that France "is supporting the king in his intransigence...by generously making available to him experts, weapons and ammunition."

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CSO: 4519/300

LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS HELD IN KURDISH AUTONOMOUS REGION 5 AUGUST

PM231444 London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic 20-26 Aug 83 p 4

[Report by Qasim as-Samawi from Irbil: "Iraqi Kurdish Parliamentary Elections"]

[Excerpts] The holding of the legislative elections in the Kurdish autonomous region in northern Iraq on 5 August on schedule was definite evidence of the fact that the developments of the Iraq-Iran war which last month suddenly extended to that region's border with Iran did not affect the course of life there nor constitute a significant danger to it.

These were the second elections to be held in the Kurdish autonomous region since the law on autonomous rule was promulgated 8 years ago.

A few kilometers from Haj 'Umrān, where Baghdad admitted that Kardamand mountain, the highest mountain in the area, had fallen into the hands of the advancing Iranian forces, the elections were being held quietly. Some 80,000 Kurdish men and women entitled to vote were converging on the ballot boxes in the three provinces--Irbil, al-Sulaymaniyah, and Dahuk--in order to elect 58 representatives out of 236 candidates from various social classes. They included university professors, government employees, housewives, peasants and ordinary workers. Although the majority of the candidates are independents, some of them are members of the Kurdish Democratic Party [KDP] (7 candidates), and the Kurdish Revolutionary Party [KRP] (5 members). Both parties are partners with the ruling Arab Socialist Ba'th Party in the "Progressive Patriotic and National Front." The candidates also included Kurds from the ruling party.

Yahya al-Jaf, the governor of Irbil, a young Kurd and member of the Ba'th party told AL-MAJALLAH: "I am a Kurdish citizen, a member of the ruling party, and an inhabitant of the area, and I have run as a candidate in this capacity." In fact al-Jaf was among the leading winners when the votes were counted in the evening.

The candidates did not include any member of the Iraqi Communist Party which is no longer a member of the "Progressive Patriotic and National Front" following the disagreement between the party and the Iraqi government. The communists are accused of "betraying the homeland," a charge which is repeated

by Sa'di Mahdi Salih, member of the Ba'th Party Regional Command and the party official in charge of the northern area. He told AL-MAJALLAH that when this party changes its current line and once again comes under the banner of the "Front," then "it can resume the exercise of all its rights, including its candidates running in such elections."

Sa'di Mahdi Salih attacked the sons of the late Kurdish leader Mustafa Barzani who split from the KDP. He said that one of them, Mas'ud, is closely connected with the CIA. He said that the Iraqi government has documents "which were found with Mas'ud's followers who were taken prisoner in recent battles in the north proving this charge."

The Barzani group had joined the invading Iranian forces in the war against Iraq. As for Jalal al-Talabani group, Salih said "it has not been confirmed that he is collaborating with the enemy but when this is established we will not hesitate to expose him."

CSO: 4400/484

NEW BANKING ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT INTERVIEWED

Beirut AL-'AMAL in Arabic 1 Jul 83 pp 271-274

[Interview with Antoine Shadir, Newly Elected President of the Banking Association: "After His Election President of the Banking Association Shadir Says, 'Banking Sector To Overcome All Crises; Eight Principal Objectives Are Targeted for Implementation' "]

[Text] The president of the Banking Association, Attorney Antoine Shadir affirmed yesterday that "Lebanon's banking sector is facing local problems. These problems will be easy to overcome, and the banking sector will be able to preserve its holdings and its liquidity." Mr Shadir indicated that among the most important principles that will be adopted by the Banking Association are non-infringement on the confidentiality of banks and development of the banking market. He thinks banks can make a contribution and set the state of economic inertia in motion by "reducing the financial burdens of commercial and industrial institutions. This matter is closely tied to the state's fiscal policy in this regard." Mr Shadir indicated that he opposed the principle of monopoly, and he said the banking sector can accommodate new banks if these banks have new plans and offer new programs.

Attorney Shadir responded to questions posed to him by the Lebanese News Agency on the occasion of his unanimous election yesterday president of the Banking Association.

[Question] What projects do you have now as president of the Banking Association?

[Answer] The new board of the Banking Association will hold a series of meetings soon to devise a 2-year plan of action for achieving the objectives of the association, improving relations between banks and devising uniform banking systems so that the standards of Beirut's financial market can be high and advanced.

[Question] What are these objectives?

[Answer] Among the most important general principles that will be adopted by the association are [the following]:

1. Under no circumstances is the confidentiality of banks to be infringed upon.
2. The free banking market which was established in 1974 is to be developed.

3. A new center for the association is to be found.
4. The basic rules of banking are to be standardized.
5. Banking transactions are to be standardized.
6. Banking documents are to be standardized.
7. A clearing house for bonds and warrants for payment is to be established.
8. A uniform data bank for banks is to be established.

[Question] What are the methods that have to be adopted to stimulate the economic stagnation in Lebanon? Is there a plan to do something about that stagnation? And how can the banking sector play its role in this area?

[Answer] Many studies have been made recently about the stagnation or economic inertia that is being experienced in the financial market, particularly in Beirut. The measures that could be put to use to stimulate that inertia are numerous. Some of them are long-term, and others can be realized in a short period of time. One of the measures that banks can implement, if the state wishes, has to do with the question of interest. In other words, banks may reduce the financial burdens of commercial and industrial institutions. This matter is closely tied to the state's fiscal policy since the treasury bonds that are issued by the Ministry of Finance stimulate the financial market in Lebanon. If the Ministry of Finance reduces the interest rate on treasury bonds, banks can also lower the interest rate on debtors' accounts.

Officials in the Council of Foreign Relations look after the matter of long-term measures. Banks play no role in this area.

An Atmosphere of Competition Exists

[Question] Banks have changed the prime rate and held down the debit interest. Some people regarded that a hindrance to competition. What do you think about that?

[Answer] The prime rate that is set by the Banking Association is set for borrowers who are considered by banks to be excellent credit risks. This cannot be considered a hindrance to competition because banks do not have to use that rate if they think their interests would be better served otherwise.

As far as the credit interest rate that was agreed upon by banks, that agreement is voluntary and not mandatory. Accordingly, a large number of banks did not join the agreement. Therefore, it may be said that an atmosphere of competition still exists regarding this matter.

A Role in Reconstruction

[Question] It is known that the Banking Association set up the Financial Company of Lebanon to stimulate the money market. What actions would be required from the company during the stage of reconstruction?

[Answer] The Financial Company of Lebanon is actually a firm that is owned by about 20 banks. The Banking Association has nothing to do with management of the firm. However, the idea for the firm was brought up in the association, and that idea became a reality. But from now on this firm will have an independent board of directors that makes decisions independent of the association.

In our capacity as shareholders in this firm, we would say that its function is to set up another financial market, to invest surplus funds in banks and to provide short-term financing to banks when they need liquid funds.

One of the most important functions of that firm is to market treasury bonds and certificates of deposit which it may issue just as other banks may. We will conduct a study in the association of these certificates of deposit to standardize their format and to make them easier to deal with.

The Principle of Issuing Permits for New Banks

[Question] What is your attitude toward the establishment of new banks? Can the banking sector under present circumstances accept permits for these banks?

[Answer] I oppose the principle of monopoly in any sector whatsoever. Also opposed to monopoly is the law that permitted the establishment of new banks in 1977; it is a legally valid law because it gives the Bank of Lebanon the opportunity to issue permits to new banks to operate. It is worth noting that the law granted the authorities in the Bank of Lebanon absolute authority to determine suitability in granting these permits. The authorities in the bank may use that authority to turn down any applications for permits without having to go back to any other authority if it becomes evident that the country no longer needs any new banks. The principle is legally sound, and it must be enforced more strictly in accordance with the conditions of the country.

But if the banking sector can accommodate new banks--and I believe that needs change as conditions change--[then permits will be issued to new banks] in accordance with the requirements of the demand for the establishment of new kinds of banks. The banking sector can accommodate new banks if they have new programs and plans. What is required or what would be welcome are new kinds of permits.

Banking Laws and Legal Codes

[Question] What legal code do you think would be suitable for encouraging banks operating in Lebanon to play a significant role in financing general reconstruction and development projects? Are there any banking laws in this regard that are pending?

[Answer] According to the legal codes and banking rules and regulations that are in effect, banks operating in Lebanon cannot take part in financing general reconstruction and development projects because most of the banks that are doing business in Lebanon are commercial banks that depend on short-term funds which may not be invested in long-term financing since that would create an imbalance in the banks, particularly since [there are no provisions] under existing laws for refinancing banks if a need for that should arise.

If we want banks to play a significant role in the coming stage of reconstruction and development, on the one hand, we will have to change the laws that are in effect. On the other hand, we will have to ensure re-financing for these joint banks, should that become necessary. This is because in most cases funds that are on hand in the banks and funds that are expected to be on hand do not exceed [a period of] 6 months.

Specialized Banks

[Question] Is it not possible to encourage the establishment of specialized banks that can ensure long-term loans?

[Answer] Banks of this kind can be established, but this would depend on deposits. There are no long-term deposits. Consequently, there is no long-term financing [either]. Meanwhile, banks have to rely on long-term resources, and these are missing from the Lebanese market.

Cooperation with the Bank of Lebanon

[Question] How do you see the future of relations between the Banking Association and the Bank of Lebanon? Are there specific demands in that regard?

[Answer] The relationship between the Banking Association, the Bank of Lebanon and the Banking Oversight Committee will be distinctive. The aim of the association is to cooperate fully with those who are responsible for monetary policy, that is the Bank of Lebanon, and those who are responsible for overseeing banks. This is because we have the same objectives, and we will try to bring about full understanding between us.

[Question] How do you see the future of the banking sector?

[Answer] Anyone who went through the period of 8 years and came out of it strong can only continue making progress toward a better banking situation despite the worldwide difficulties that the largest banks in the world are facing. These large banks are having difficulties because the countries that owe them money have all but stopped paying back their debts.

The banking sector in Lebanon is not facing such problems. Its problems are local. The banking sector can overcome these problems and can maintain its holdings and its liquidity.

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UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

UAE DAILY ON KUWAIT'S REFUSAL TO ACCEPT U.S. AMBASSADOR

GF190800 Abu Dhabi WAM in Arabic 0705 GMT 19 Aug 83

[Excerpts] Dubayy, 19 Aug (WAM)--The newspaper AL-BAYAN today advised the U.S. administration to accept Kuwait's apology [i'tidhar] for not accepting the nomination of Brandon Grove as U.S. ambassador to Kuwait "and to look for a candidate qualified to bolster relations and not to destroy them because these relations have many reasons for tension due to the continued U.S. bias to Israel and its backing of its expansionist aggression with the most advanced weapons and with all political, financial, and economic means its occupation of the Arab territories requires."

In its editorial under the headline "The U.S. Administration Crisis," the newspaper today held the United States responsible for the current crisis which resulted from Kuwait's apology for not accepting the nomination of the former U.S. consul-general in Jerusalem. The paper said: The U.S. State Department in particular should have abided by the well known custom and the national feelings of any country when nominating the ambassador which would represent it in that country.

The newspaper noted that if Grove's nomination was made with good intentions, "The United States would accept Kuwait's apology without this uproar and would have even apologized itself to the Kuwaiti Government for this nomination particularly when Kuwait is anxious for its relations with the United States and others to remain good and tension-free and when the United States is supposed to know better than any other country in the world the dimensions of the Arab-Israeli conflict with all its complications."

CSO: 4400/484

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

BRIEFS

COMPUTER FIRM CONTACTS ISRAELI COMPANY--The Yeda computer company was surprised recently to receive a letter from one of the Arab oil emirates. The Computer Consultancy Co. of Abu Dhabi sent a letter to the Israeli company asking for details about programs developed in Israel. The Yeda company, which is also an agent for the U.S. computer company Apple, was surprised by the letter, and does not know who recommended them to the Arab company. Yeda Director General Yoram Friedman is now in reserves, but when he returns he will try to reply to the company from Abu Dhabi. [Text] [TA121444 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 12 Aug 83 p 8]

CSO: 4400/484

TEHRAN REPORTS ON 'CONSPIRACY' AGAINST AFGHANISTAN

GF241844 Tehran International Service in Turkish 1830 GMT 23 Aug 83

[From the "A Glance at Developments in Iran and in the World" program]

[Text] The struggle of the Afghan Mujahidin attained a peak level recently, particularly during last week, after they broadened the dimensions of their resistance. Reports say that violent clashes are continuing, particularly in Herat and Qandahar Provinces. Currently, the Muslim fighters have achieved magnificent victories in the said regions. The heavy losses inflicted on the puppet Marxist forces and the occupationist troops of the Soviet Union have caused an increase in the conflict between the Parcham and Khalq factions supporting the puppet regime and considerably weakened the strength of the rotten forces loyal to the Karmal regime. The defection of the troops from their garrisons to the ranks of the Mujahidin is yet another factor. And, the longstanding conflicts between the Parcham and Khalq factions oppressing Afghanistan have recently attained broader dimensions.

The conflicts among the rotten military units of the Karmal regime have prevented the newly formed special armored units from carrying out their prime task of suppressing the Muslim people a short time ago. The special units controlled by the PDPA disobeyed their superiors and set fire to a large quantity of ammunition. This incident caused violent clashes among the forces of the state, resulting in the death of numerous people. And, although the Karmal regime has been endeavoring to prevent such incidents, it has been unsuccessful thus far. Consequently, it regards such incidents as marking the end of its administration.

Regardless of the limitless support the Soviet Union has been giving to the Karmal regime, there is a strong possibility that the unrest in Afghanistan may put an end to the communist regime. The present state of affairs may make the superpowers decide to change the current regime. According to reliable forces, the representatives are holding talks on the possibility of returning Zahir Shah back to Afghanistan and on the way he would come to power. However, the Muslims in Afghanistan are aware that this conspiracy is aimed at suppressing them and crushing their struggle. Thus, they have been expressing their opposition to such a conspiracy.

The Muslims of Afghanistan, who have exposed the satanic conspiracies of both the East and the West on numerous occasions, have to continue their just struggle and draw a line on compromises aimed at diverting the struggle of the people.

INDIAN CONCERN OVER SRI LANKA SITUATION REPORTED

Rao's 27 July Statement

Madras THE HINDU in English 28 Jul 83 p 9

[Text] New Delhi, July 27--The following is the text of the statement by Mr P.V. Narasimha Rao, External Affairs Minister in the Lok Sabha today on the Sri Lanka situation.

Mr Speaker Sir,

As members are aware, ethnic violence had sharply increased in Sri Lanka after the elections in the middle of May 1983. There have been incidents of clashes between the Tamil minority community and the Sinhala majority, resulting in loss of life and property and disruption of essential services, communications, etc.

The Government of Sri Lanka first declared an emergency and then, on June 4, promulgated the Public Security Ordinance, which was to be confined to the Northern Province. A provision of this ordinance authorised the armed forces to dispose of dead bodies without any inquest or post-mortem.

This measure among all the others has been viewed with apprehension both in Sri Lanka and abroad.

Developments affecting the Tamil population in Sri Lanka give rise to feelings on the Indian side and can create situations of strain. The Government of India conveyed their views the Government of Sri Lanka in a constructive spirit having regard to the way these developments can impinge on our relations.

In this instance, therefore, we felt it was our duty to draw attention to possible repercussions of recent events, especially the ordinance provisions. We conveyed our concern about these developments, making it clear at the same time that it is an internal matter of the Sri Lanka Government and that it is entirely for them to safeguard unity and deal with the situation.

This was conveyed to them through diplomatic channels both here and in Colombo as has been done on similar occasions in the past.

Unwarranted Criticism

We were, however, surprised to find that suddenly there appeared in the Sri Lankan press a spate of unwarranted and unbecoming public criticism of India, taking into its sweep such totally extraneous matters as India's chairmanship of the non-aligned movement, relations with our neighbours, our internal situation, etc.

This has unfortunately exacerbated feelings further. Meanwhile, there has followed a fresh outburst of violence and terrorism in the Northern Province which has spread to other parts of the island including the capital.

This has most regrettably involved some members of our mission in Colombo. Curfew has been imposed in Colombo and yesterday extended to the whole country but sporadic looting and arson are reported to have continued. Fortunately, there has been no loss of life in the Indian mission. The full extent of loss to property is not yet known.

We have sought and been given the assurances of the Sri Lankan authorities that they will safeguard our officers and staff and their property. Last night I received the personal assurance of the Sri Lankan Foreign Minister that the situation was being brought under control and all possible precautions for the safety of our people were being taken.

IOB Burnt Down

The latest reports indicate that on the one hand, precautionary measures seemed to be bringing the situation under control while on the other, there are reports of violence. The international media have reported a large number of deaths, including prisoners in jail. The Indian Overseas Bank is reported to have been burnt down though all its staff are safe.

Reports that the State Bank of India building, in which our High Commission has its office, was set on fire for a while are awaiting clarification since our communications have been disrupted. A message has now come through confirming that all our personnel are safe, and that those in the most affected areas have been provided hotel accommodation by the Sri Lankan Government who have also provided security guards at many of our buildings.

Matter of Anxiety

It is naturally a matter of anxiety for all of us that Indian Nationals and property have been affected by the cycle of violence in Sri Lanka. We are watching developments and can only hope that order and tranquillity will be restored quickly.

Despite this unfortunate turn of events, the need of the hour is to restore normality and our relations to continue to be based on amity and mutual respect. Accordingly, while we have strongly represented to the Sri Lankan Government about the violence against our nationals and sought their full cooperation in ensuring their safety, we have also stressed the importance of working in friendship and cooperation.

We in India know full well both the necessity and the difficulty of safeguarding a nation's unity and integrity. We understand the problems facing the Government of Sri Lanka. We also value our relations with this friendly neighbouring country.

We wish them success in quickly restoring communal harmony.

'No Change in Basic Position'

Sir, there have been a number of rapid developments in Sri Lanka. We are naturally keeping in close touch both with the Sri Lankan authorities and our mission. Our basic position remains as conveyed to the Sri Lankan Government. This position was clearly indicated by our Prime Minister in answer to a press question on July 23. I can do no better than to conclude by quoting it:

"I am aware of the great concern of the people of Tamil Nadu at recent developments regarding the Tamil population of Sri Lanka. This concern is shared by people in other parts of India also. This is an internal problem of Sri Lanka. India does not wish to, nor does it interfere in the domestic affairs of another country, and when there are people of common origin in two independent countries, it is specially important not to do or say anything which can be misconstrued as interference. We are against secessionist movements in sovereign States. Nor do we condone terrorism. However, the reports appearing in the foreign press about the situation in Sri Lanka are disturbing. We cannot help feeling distressed."

In societies like ours personal liberties, in particular the rights of the minorities and respect for and protection of these rights, assume special importance. In India it has been our constant effort to maintain harmony through cooperation among different communities in Sri Lanka also realise this.

For our part, we are deeply committed to maintain and develop friendly relations with Sri Lanka as befits two sovereign neighbours who have so much in common. However, we hope that in dealing with this particular problem Sri Lanka will respond in the same spirit and will bear in mind the sentiments of the Indian people.--PTI

'Appalled' at Violence

Madras THE HINDU in English 27 Jul 83 p 9

[Article by G.K. Reddy]

[Text] New Delhi, July 26--The sad sequence of events in Sri Lanka, where the running feuds between Sinhalese and Tamils have assumed anti-Indian overtones, are casting an ugly shadow over the meeting of the South Asia seven which opens at the level of Foreign Secretaries on Thursday to prepare for the first Foreign Ministers conference on regional cooperation.

If there is no interruption in flight schedules, the Foreign Secretary of Sri Lanka, Mr W.T. Jayasinghe, who is due to arrive tomorrow for these talks, is bound to discuss the unfortunate developments in Sri Lanka with Indian officials, before his Foreign Minister, Mr A.C.S. Hameed, comes to Delhi on Saturday with a fuller brief from his government on the subject.

The Government of India which has been taken aback by the petulant over-reaction of Sri Lanka to its well-meaning expression of concern over the harsh methods being adopted to deal with acts of terrorism, is appalled at the orgy of violence let loose at people of Indian origin in the island and the apparent inability of the authorities to cope with it. But in conveying its distress at the happenings in Sri Lanka, India has sought no more than an assurance that lives and properties of these people would be protected, without blaming Sri Lanka for this deplorable situation.

The Sri Lanka Foreign Minister who is reported to be coming with a personal message from his President, Mr J.R. Jayewardene, to the Prime Minister, Mrs Indira Gandhi, will be discussing these sad events with the External Affairs Minister, Mr P.V. Narasimha Rao, in an effort to persuade the Government of India to urge restraint on the Tamil Nadu leaders who are accused of inciting the Tamil population to Jaffna to press forward with their separatist movement. But he will be told in no uncertain terms that it is the unsympathetic attitude of the Sri Lanka Government that has been driving the Tamils towards extremism and that the best way of pacifying them would be to meet their legitimate grievances.

Whatever the outcome of these sad events, the Indo-Sri Lankan relations will remain soured for quite some time, providing a discordant note to the efforts under way for increased South Asian regional cooperation. It is not unlikely that some other countries in the region which have their own antipathies towards India will try to egg on Sri Lanka to adopt a more recalcitrant attitude, as though it was a victim of big power chauvinism.

There is no detailed information in Delhi about the nature and extent of damage caused to Indian property through arson and looting or the lives lost in communal violence. The Government is still awaiting confirmation of the reported reprisals by the Sri Lanka Army and police on innocent civilians following the ambush in which several soldiers had died. The Sinhalese extremists who have been on the rampage have been attacking people of Indian origin and setting fire to even bank buildings and offices, and it is not known how effective the army and police have been in controlling them.

Diplomatic Problems

The cabled reports sent by the Indian High Commission in curfew-bound Colombo are subject to considerable delay due to interruption of telecommunications. The absence of authentic reports of the casualties and damage to property has led to wild rumours causing great anxiety in Tamil Nadu, besides posing diplomatic problems for the Centre.

The Government is trying to avoid a discussion in Parliament of these unfortunate events, if possible, while the South Asian Foreign Ministers and Foreign Secretaries are meeting in Delhi. But the DMK members of the Lok Sabha have been trying to mobilise enough support for an adjournment motion, if the Speaker can be prevailed upon to agree in view of the gravity of the situation, or else at least a calling attention to compel the Government to make a detailed statement.

Rao Colombo Visits

Madras THE HINDU in English 29 Jul 83 p 1

[Article by G.K. Reddy]

[Excerpts] New Delhi, July 28--The External Affairs Minister, accompanied by the Secretary in charge of South Asia, Mr K.S. Bajpai, left around 8 p.m. on this delicate mission and he is due to fly back to Delhi either tomorrow night or on Saturday morning depending on the developments.

There has been a marked hardening of the Indian attitude in the wake of the shocking reports of a second massacre of Tamil prisoners and the spread of the riots to Trincomalee and other places. The food situation in Sri Lanka, particularly in the northern districts, is said to be pretty grim because of the virtual breakdown in the distribution of the meagre stocks at the disposal of the Government.

But the ambivalent attitude of the Central Government in dealing with this crisis, which has hitherto been characterised by some sort of dichotomy between its domestic political concern in relation to Tamil Nadu and its anxiety over the worsening situation in Sri Lanka, was equally evident today when the Congress (I), AIADMK and DMK staged separate protest demonstrations in front of the Sri Lanka High Commission. The AIADMK offer to join the Congress (I) march was ignored because the ruling party did not want to be associated in any manner with the DMK which could not have been kept out of a joint demonstration.

Offer of Relief Supplies

Though Mrs Gandhi did not disclose it in her brief announcement in Parliament, one of the issues Mr Narasimha Rao is going to discuss with Mr Jayewardene will be an offer of relief supplies by India for the Tamil people who have been reduced to destitution in the unprecedented mob violence. But there has been no suggestion of any kind from the Indian side to send troops to help control the situation.

There is no parallel between the happenings in 1971 when India readily responded to an SOS from Sri Lanka for help in coping with an insurgency, and the present situation when the Sri Lanka Army and police have either been turning a blind eye to the orgy of violence let loose against the Tamil

population by the Sinhalese militants or worse still have been active participants in the slaughter and pillage of innocent people. The first task of Mr Jayewardene is to control his own armed forces on the rampage before he can restore even a semblance of order in Colombo itself, not to speak of the strife-torn northern districts.

Indiscriminate Slaughter

The impression in Delhi is that Mr Jayewardene is losing or has already lost control on the Army and police which have run amuck and engaged in indiscriminate slaughter of innocent civilians. The situation in Colombo might return to normal soon, but the trouble is going to last longer in the outlying districts.

The Centre is naturally worried about the political fall-out in Tamil Nadu, apart from its anxiety about the fate of the Tamil population in Sri Lanka. It is the combination of these two factors that has compelled the Centre to think of some initiative and after a lot of dithering it decided to rush Mr Narasimha Rao to Colombo in an apparent display of some action.

Meeting With Jayewardene

Madras THE HINDU in English 30 Jul 83 p 1

[Article by G.K. Reddy]

[Excerpts] New Delhi, July 29--The big worry in Delhi is that the Sinhalese militants might try to drive out the panic-stricken Tamils from their homes in a diabolical bid to compel them to flee to India to escape death and destruction. Any such exodus of an estimated 100,000 rendered homeless in these riots, will confront India with a Bangladesh-type crisis which culminated in the 1971 Indo-Pak conflict.

So the whole thrust of Indian diplomacy is aimed at averting such a situation, first by prevailing upon Mr Jayewardene and his colleagues to take every possible step to end this violence and then extending the fullest cooperation to Sri Lanka in rehabilitating the Tamils who have suffered so grievously in these riots. The Government of India would also like to see that their legitimate demands are met and that the promised restoration of civic rights to the stateless Tamils is done quickly to generate the necessary confidence.

Over-cautious

The Government of India has also to bear the cross for the criticism that, in its anxiety not to displease Sri Lanka as an important country in the non-aligned movement, it tended to be over-cautious in not voicing its indignation in stronger terms before the situation got out of control.

And though the critics are now speaking with the benefit of hindsight, it is true that Mrs Gandhi herself was taken aback by the intensity of feeling in Parliament, with many Congress (I) members themselves complaining bitterly to her against the surprisingly hesitant response of the Government, even after Sinhalese fury against the Tamil minority had reached the flash-point.

Ship for Tamils

Madras THE HINDU in English 31 Jul 83 p 1

[Article by G.K. Reddy]

[Excerpts] New Delhi, July 30--The readiness of India to contribute relief supplies like food, clothing, medicines and other materials in short supply in Sri Lanka was conveyed personally by the External Affairs Minister, Mr P.V. Narasimha Rao, during his talks with the Sri Lanka President, Mr J.R. Jayewardene, in Colombo yesterday on this tragic situation. The Sri Lanka authorities said they would examine the nature and extent of the requirements and get in touch with India as soon as they are ready to begin the relief and rehabilitation operations.

It was officially stated that, in conceding that these unfortunate events were basically an internal affair of Sri Lanka, Mr Narasimha Rao had told the Sri Lanka leaders that India could not refrain from voicing its concern and expressing sympathy for the plight of the affected people of Indian origin, whether they were full-fledged Indian nationals, Sri Lanka citizens or stateless persons. The strong cultural and emotional ties they had with the Tamil Nadu people made it incumbent on the Government of India give expression to its anguish and distress over these atrocities committed on helpless people. He also urged them not to misconstrue this well-meaning concern for interference in their internal affairs which was not India's intention.

As India sees it, the real significance of Mr Narasimha Rao's visit is that it has taken place at all in this highly explosive atmosphere against the background of an organised and orchestrated anti-Indian campaign. The plain-speaking that he did, has no doubt, had a sobering effect, but he did not evidently succeed in persuading Mr Jayewardene to take tougher steps to end the appalling violence.

Though he was able to meet a wide spectrum of Sri Lanka leaders from the President and the Prime Minister down to the Tamil Ministers in the Cabinet and some representatives of non-official opinion, the External Affairs Minister was not able to visit any of the refugee camps in Colombo or Kandy when he drove through the disturbed areas in both these places. The Sri Lanka authorities were apparently not too keen that he should meet the victims of this macabre tragedy and hear their harrowing tales of indiscriminate slaughter and the mediaeval brutalities of burning people alive and massacring even prisoners in moments of blind revenge bred by inflamed passions.

Matter of Grave Concern

The Sri Lanka Army consisting of 20,000 men and the police force of 30,000 should normally be adequate to restore order, but they are disaffected and defiant to the point of openly participating in the killings and plunder of Indian properties to wreak vengeance or share the loot. It is this factor that continues to cause grave concern to India since nothing can be done to enforce discipline unless Mr Jayewardene and his advisers are ready to assert themselves without fear of consequences.

Gandhi Meets Tamil Nadu Group

Madras THE HINDU in English 1 Aug 83 p 1

[Article by G.K. Reddy]

[Excerpt] New Delhi, July 31--The Prime Minister, Mrs Indira Gandhi, assured an all-party delegation from Tamil Nadu, which met her today to discuss the Sri Lanka situation, that the entire country shared the concern and anguish of the Tamil Nadu people over the tragic happenings in the island.

She told the 16-member delegation led by the Chief Minister, Mr M.G. Ramachandran, that the Centre was dealing with this as a national issue affecting the whole country, not merely as a problem concerning the Tamil Nadu alone.

The Prime Minister said that, as a symbol of the Centre's sympathy and solidarity with Tamil Nadu, all Central Government offices also will be closed on Tuesday, August 2, during the one-day bandh in the State. This is the first time ever that the Central Government is officially participating in a bandh called by a State Government, since it is aimed at focussing national attention on a sad event that transcends party politics and parochial considerations.

The Government of India, she told the Tamil Nadu delegation, was in constant and continuous touch with the Sri Lanka Government, and also in hourly contact with the Indian High Commission in Colombo, and was doing everything possible to impress upon the Sri Lanka leaders the need for firm steps to restore normality soon. She will be meeting the Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka, Mr A.C.S. Hameed, who is arriving tonight for the South Asian Ministerial meeting and if necessary she will speak again to the Sri Lanka President, Mr J.R. Jayewardene.

Mrs Gandhi, therefore, appealed to all political parties in India, especially those in Tamil Nadu, not to say or do anything that might aggravate the situation either in India or Sri Lanka while urging them to extend their full support to the Government in tackling this grave problem. In making this appeal she had evidently in mind the reported threat of the DMK to start an anti-Centre agitation in Tamil Nadu as a protest against its alleged indifference to the sufferings of the Tamils in Sri Lanka.

During the hour-long meeting with her, the Tamil Nadu leaders presented a lengthy memorandum tracing the history of the present crisis in Sri Lanka, describing the plight of the Tamil people and pleading for some energetic steps by India to exert pressures on the Sri Lanka Government to meet the legitimate demands of the people of Indian origin there. Among the steps suggested were a reference of the problem to the United Nations, the stationing of an international peace-keeping force to protect the persecuted Tamil people, offer of relief supplies and association of Indian personnel with the distribution and arrangement for repatriation of the homeless persons to safer areas and facilities for letting women and children come to India for shelter at least until normal conditions were restored and they could go back with safety and confidence.

Bad Precedent

The Prime Minister promised to study the memorandum, but she said that any attempt to internationalise this sad event by taking the issue to the United Nations or asking for a peace-keeping force, would not serve any useful purpose. It might even set a bad precedent for the future by encouraging other countries to justify foreign intervention in similar situations.

There was a suggestion that India should at least raise this issue at the meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the seven South Asian Nations opening tomorrow in Delhi. But Mrs Gandhi told them that such bilateral matters could not be brought before this forum which was primarily intended to promote regional cooperation. She, however, promised to make a suitable mention in a general way, perhaps in a semi-philosophical manner reflecting her distress over such political or ethnic dissensions, in her inaugural address to the conference.

The Prime Minister told the Tamil Nadu delegation that, though the situation in Sri Lanka was still tense, it was nevertheless showing some signs of slight improvement. The Government was taking firm steps and the Army and police were enforcing curfew more rigorously to prevent further violence. If this trend continued, the mob fury would start simmering down soon.

Arms Request Denied

Madras THE HINDU in English 1 Aug 83 p 1

[Article by G.K. Reddy]

[Excerpt] New Delhi, Aug 2--The Sri Lanka crisis took a strange turn today with the Jayewardene Government vehemently denying that it had sought the assistance of the United States, Britain, Pakistan and Bangladesh and India maintaining that there was some "substance" in the UPI report to this effect.

The External Affairs Minister, Mr P.V. Narasimha Rao, who made a detailed statement on his visit to Colombo in both Houses of Parliament this afternoon, said that the Indian High Commissioner, Mr J.S. Chatwal, was told by the Foreign Secretary of Sri Lanka Mr W.T. Jayasinghe, that the UPI report from Colombo was "mischievous" and that the Delhi-based American Correspondent who filed it from Colombo yesterday was being expelled from the country.

The Indian High Commissioner was also told that the Sri Lanka envoy in Delhi, Mr B.P. Tilakaratne, was being asked to issue a contradiction, but it was not clear from what Mr Chatwal had told the External Affairs Ministry in what form the Sri Lankan contradiction was being issued, whether it would say quite categorically that no assistance of a military nature was being sought from outside.

Cagey

The Government of India was trying to ascertain from the four countries whom Sri Lanka had approached for assistance—the United States, Britain, Pakistan and Bangladesh--whether the help sought was for only dealing with the internal situation or meeting any apprehended Indian action. Though these four countries have assured India that they have no desire to get involved in this messy situation, they have been somewhat cagey in this crucial point.

It is equally surprising that the Sri Lankan Government should ask its High Commissioner in Delhi to issue the contradiction, while it should have officially denied the report in Colombo itself to rebut the false stories appearing in the local press conjuring visions of possible Indian military intervention. The Indian Government is therefore waiting to see whether the Sri Lankan authorities would take the necessary steps to get this contradiction published in the local papers to clarify the position.

The External Affairs Minister said while informing Parliament of the Sri Lankan repudiation of the UPI report, that his statement had been drafted earlier on the basis of the Government's own information that there was "substance" in it. He said: "I am not in a position to give details, but the House and the nation should know that there is substance in the report."

No Explicit Denial

He also drew attention to the fact that the Sri Lankan Foreign Minister, Mr A.C.S. Hameed, told the press at the Delhi airport before he left for Bombay en route to Colombo last evening, that "if we seek any assistance from the international community, rest assured that we will also seek it from India." What was significant, as implied by Mr Narasimha Rao in his statement, was that Mr Hameed did not deny quite explicitly that Sri Lanka had not sought any foreign assistance.

The External Affairs Minister added that some (Indian) papers had carried the UPI report as though Sri Lanka had sought assistance not for its law and order situation, but against a foreign power and that the Colombo press went a step further in projecting India "as that possible foreign power" as he put it. He added: "We are looking into all aspects of these reports and are also in touch with several governments, including those specified in the press reports, to emphasise the nature of India's concern at the existing situation in Sri Lanka and at the possible future course of developments, including any foreign involvement of this kind in the region."

There was no question at all of Sri Lanka needing any foreign assistance against India since the country's leaders "fully understood our views and position." But if Sri Lanka needed Indian assistance, Mr Narasimha Rao stressed it was a different matter on which the two Governments could remain in touch for meeting its requirements.

The External Affairs Ministry started calling in the envoys of different countries beginning with the four mentioned in the UPI report to explain the Indian position and seek the necessary assurances that they would not get involved in this situation. At the same time Mr Narasimha Rao gave a hint in the Rajya Sabha, in response to the pleas of members, that India was examining the various options open to it for raising the question of violation of human rights of the Tamil population in Sri Lanka in "a suitable forum at an appropriate time."

The rest of his statement merely recounted the sad sequence of events in Sri Lanka, the talks he had in Colombo and the steps the local authorities were taking to control the situation, the help that India was extending to bring solace and succour to the victims of violence and the apologia of the Jayawardene Government that its task had been complicated by hostile groups bent on exploiting the communal animosities to bring down the Government. Otherwise no new point emerged from his lengthy statement, except the reported Sri Lankan bid to seek foreign assistance.

Concern in Parliament

Madras THE HINDU in English 5 Aug 83 p 1

[Article by G.K. Reddy]

[Excerpt] New Delhi, Aug 4--An all-party committee of members of Parliament was formed today to keep in close touch with the Sri Lanka developments and advise the Government on what should be done to deal with this situation. There was also a move afoot for members to donate at least a month's salary for the relief of the victims.

There is some disquiet in parliamentary circles over the possible political motivations behind the Sri Lankan move to relocate in Jaffna the displaced Tamils from Colombo and other southern points under the pretext of sending them to a safer place. The necessary clarification was sought by the Government of India when the request was made by Sri Lanka for Indian ships to help transport these Tamil refugees.

It was told that the displaced Tamils in the Colombo area who have been herded into refugee camps consist of two categories, those with some links with Jaffna and others who were stateless persons with no particular roots in the southern districts.

Though this explanation had been accepted with some reservations, India continues to have some serious misgivings about Sri Lanka's policy of regrouping the displaced Tamils in the northern part of the island, unless the intention is to encourage them to migrate to India if possible.

The Indian diplomatic missions abroad have been fully briefed about the Sri Lanka developments so that they can explain the complexities of this tragic situation to the respective Governments.

The foreign press has generally given full coverage to the plight of the Tamils and the terrible atrocities committed on them, but there is considerable ignorance abroad about the origins of the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka and also the attempts made by successive Governments to reduce the Tamil minority to the level of second class citizens.

The legislation that Sri Lanka Parliament was enacting today not only to ban any party preaching secession, but also deprive of their civic rights those who are not prepared to repudiate it publicly will come as an eye-opener to the outside world about the extent to which the present Government is prepared to go to inflict these indignities on the Tamil minority in the name of fighting terrorism.

CSO: 4600/1499

GOVERNMENT REPORTEDLY TO SIGN ANTARCTIC PACT

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 3 Aug 83 p 1

[Text] London, August 2 (PTI)--India had decided to accede to the Antarctic treaty so far signed by 14 industrialised countries constituting the exclusive "Antarctic club," highly-placed diplomatic sources said here today.

Initially, India was seeking a consultative status under the 1959 treaty's article nine, relating to scientific research activity such as establishment of a scientific station or despatch of a scientific expedition.

India has already sent two successful scientific expeditions to the huge continent at the south pole. It was planning to send a third expedition in the near future which would include two women, the sources said.

Britain, one of the 14 original signatories, has assured India of its full support in its move to accede to the treaty. Australia is also believed to have indicated its support.

The decision by India to accede to the treaty is understood to have been mentioned during a call by India's high commissioner to the U.K., Dr V.A. Seyid Muhammad, on the British foreign secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, here yesterday.

Indian and other developing countries have been demanding that Antarctica should be treated as the common heritage of mankind and not as an exclusive preserve of the 14 signatories to the treaty.

The 14-nation club has been making attempts to lay down new rules on exploitation of the continent's food, mineral and oil resources in the hope that these would act as an "insurance" against third world demands.

The issue found mention in the New Delhi non-aligned summit declaration which demanded that the continent be kept open to all countries.

Suggestions that the issue be put on the agenda of the United Nations general assembly session next month have met with little or no response from signatories to the treaty who fear that this might lead to regulations like those adopted in regard to exploitation of sea bed resources.

The original signatories are themselves divided over rights for exploiting oil and mineral resources in Antarctica and on the protection of its environment. They concluded a two week closed door meeting in Bonn last week but failed to reach an agreement.

Seven of the signatories have been claiming sovereign rights and demanding royalty from non-claimants for exploiting oil and mineral resources. The demand has been rejected by the remaining seven.

The member-countries also differed at the Bonn meeting over protecting the Antarctic environment and over the legal definition of prospecting.

CSO: 4600/1498

MORE GUARDS TO BE STATIONED ON BENGAL BORDER

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 1 Aug 83 p 6

[Text]

NEW DELHI July 31: The Union government has raised the number of posts of the Border Security Force to strengthen the manning of the Bangladesh-West Bengal border in response to reports of growing infiltration of unauthorised persons from across the international frontier.

This has been done in spite of the West Bengal government's reminding its state that there is a "refugees' problem" in the state. The Union government has taken the initiative to strengthen the border in view of reports received from its own source that there has been a "dramatic" rise in the number of infiltrators in some areas along the border.

GROWING INFILTRATION

There will now be a larger number of posts on the 2000 km border. The distance between two posts will be narrowed down to 15 km and even so, it will be far from adequate to put an effective check on the unauthorised migration, which has been growing steadily.

The explanation given by home ministry sources is that the intensity of protective measures on a particular border largely depends on the need perception of the local authorities. The state government has so far not shown to be overmuch worried about the problem.

Assam presents a contrast. Even though infiltration across the Assam-Bangladesh border has totally stopped, the protective measures have been considerably strengthened so much so that there are now posts on the two sectors of the border at an interval of 3.5 km.

The Assam government has also deployed its own police forces to put up a second line of defence against infiltration.

Quite obviously, this is the result of the three-decade-long agitation against "foreigners" in Assam. In Union and the state governments between them have succeeded in almost totally sealing the border.

CSO: 4606/1494

ASSAM TRIBUNALS TO BEGIN WORK BY OCTOBER

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 4 Aug 83 p 1

[Text] New Delhi, Aug 3--The Home Minister, Mr P.C. Sethi, told the Lok Sabha during question hour today that the 20 tribunals for detecting foreigners being set up by the Assam Government under the Foreigners Tribunal Order of 1964 would begin functioning by October.

He agreed that, ultimately, there had to be one such tribunal for each Assembly constituency, but it was difficult to get the required personnel.

The State Government had been approached in this matter, and financial incentives were also being considered for those joining the tribunals.

Mr Sethi, who was answering supplementaries to a question on the identification of foreign nationals in Assam, said that if it appeared that the process of setting up the tribunals was slow, it was because the AASU and other similar organizations had never allowed the tribunals to be set up. It was only after the formation of the present State Government that the process could be started.

He said that the Government was considering a proposal to erect a barbed wire fence along the State's border with Bangladesh and added that the Government was aware of the large influx of illegal immigrants into West Bengal and would try to end it.

Mr G.M. Banatwalla asked whether the Government would ensure that the people whose documents had been burnt in the February incidents would not be harrassed? Mr Sethi told him that it would be specifically included in the guidelines to the proposed tribunals.

Mr G.M. Banatwalla asked whether the Government would ensure that the people whose documents had been burnt in the February incidents would not be harrassed? Mr Sethi told him that it would be specifically included in the guidelines to the proposed tribunals.

In his written reply, the Minister of State for Home, Mr Ninar Ranjan Laskar said: 'The foreigners tribunals set up under the Foreigners Tribunal Order 1964 have been in existence in Assam since 1964. Their numbers vary from time to time.

"Certain modifications in the scheme of foreigners tribunals, so as to make them more effective, are under consideration. Among the suggestions for modifications are that each tribunal has three members, there be provision for an appellate tribunal and ousting the jurisdiction of subordinate civil courts.

"The Home Minister had informed the House that it was proposed to have one tribunal in each Assembly constituency. However, the Government of Assam recommended 20 tribunals to start with. Out of the three members in each tribunal they have proposed that two be from outside the State. All the members will be of the rank of district judges or additional district judges.

"They have also suggested that appellate tribunals be manned by a retired high court judge or judges.

"It has been suggested that detained guidelines for identification and detection of foreigners should be issued.

"Various State Governments have been requested to forward the names of serving or retired district or additional district judges willing to work on the tribunals.

PTI adds: Eight speed boats and 36 country boats had been sanctioned to intensify patrolling on the riverine portion of Assam to prevent infiltration of foreigners, the Lok Sabha was informed today by Mr Laskar, in a written answer to Mr S.M. Dev.

The Janata Party president, Mr Chandra Sekhar, has urged the Centre to utilize the present peaceful atmosphere in Assam to thrash out a settlement of the foreigners issue.

He said that the situation in the State had returned to normal because of the efforts of the movement leaders who had suspended their agitational programme.

But the Government should not consider such a "gesture" as weakness, Mr Chandra Sekhar told a public meeting at Dibrugarh yesterday. He said the movement had not lost public support.

CSO: 4600/1495

ELECTION COMMISSION REPORTS ON ASSAM ASSEMBLY POLL

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 3 Aug 83 p 1

[Text] New Delhi, Aug 2--The Election Commission's report on the election for the Assam Assembly, held in February, was tabled in the Lok Sabha today. The Commission claimed that it would have preferred to follow "a reasonable conventional course of action which would have enabled it to give adequate notice to political parties and make satisfactory administrative arrangements for holding the elections."

But, with the Centre intimating "only in January that it was proposed to revoke President's Rule in the State by the end of February, the Commission was left with no alternative whatsoever but to adhere to the deadline for holding the general election."

(According to PTI, the Commission has held all the Governments, whether Centre or State, responsible for allowing the situation to drift. "Serious efforts to find a solution started only after 1980. Prior to that the approach to an important national issue affecting the political and economic life of a sensitive State, was at best lackadaisical. It is also regrettable, and also a matter of record, that in spite of several reminders to the State Government the daily report on the law and order situation, which was required to be sent to the Commission, was not sent at all. As a result there was no authoritative source on which the Commission could rely for vital information.")

The Commission noted in the report that it had "hopefully awaited a green signal to undertake a thorough revision of electoral rolls after the long-awaited settlement of the foreigners issue."

Amendment

"There were hopes even during the last round of talks which ended on January 5, as the leaders of certain political parties were initiating action for an amendment of the Constitution (for extending President's Rule beyond one year) and also giving out a favourable reaction to a cut-off year," that some parties would agree to support the constitutional amendment in case the talks did not succeed.

"The Commission, therefore, expected that the talks would succeed, leading to the amendment of the Constitution or that it would be approached for a certificate as envisaged in Article 356(5) after the proclamation of Emergency in Assam."

The Election Commission said the election had thrown up several basic constitutional questions which required to be determined and clarified on the basis of facts and the provisions of the law.

The questions were:

"(1) Whether the Union Government can stipulate a deadline for revocation of President's Rule under Article 356 and force the hands of the Election Commission to hold the general election within the deadline and constitute a new Legislative Assembly;

"(2) Whether the Election Commission can decline to adhere to the deadline on the ground of its convenience dictated by various important considerations like giving sufficient time to political parties, revision of electoral roll, etc;

"(3) If the Election Commission so declines, what would be the constitutional effect and implication if and when the President's proclamation is revoked unilaterally on the date stipulated by the Union Government and the new Legislative Assembly is not constituted through a general election before the date of such revocation;

Five-Year Term

"(4) Whether the President's proclamation under Article 356 can be operated towards the end of the five-year term of a Legislative Assembly in such a manner as to override the mandatory provisions of Article 172(1) read with other relevant Articles referred to above and continue the operation of the President's Rule beyond the five-year term;

"(5) Whether in the context of the federal and basic structure of our Constitution with periodical elections as one of the important planks of such a structure, the provisions of Article 356 dealing with a particular contingency of failure of the constitutional machinery existing for the time being can be so invoked as to continue President's Rule beyond the five-year term without giving an opportunity to the ultimate sovereign i.e., the people to bring into force the normal constitutional machinery as envisaged in Article 172(1) of the Constitution."

The commission added: "These questions should be examined in depth by the Attorney-General and other constitutional pundits and, if necessary, by the Supreme Court in a reference under Article 143 of the Constitution. The Commission, it may be stated, has already referred these questions to the Attorney-General.

CSO: 4600/1495

'PHENOMENAL' GROWTH IN RSS MEMBERSHIP REPORTED

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 4 Aug 83 p 7

[Text] Srinagar, Aug 3--The Jammu and Kashmir Government has decided to hold a high-level inquiry into the alleged irregular acquisition of land by Dharendra Brahmachari for setting up two yoga ashrams in the Mantalai and Katra areas of Jammu region.

The issue was raised by Mr Bhim Singh, chairman of the State Panthers Party, during question hour in the Assembly here today. The Revenue Minister, Mr P.L. Handoo, said that revenue records did not show Dharendra Brahmachari as being in possession of any land, either at Mantalai or at Katra. However, 337 kanals of land at Mantalai and 177 kanals and 17 marlas at Katra had been recorded as being in possession of the Mantalai Yoga Ashram Committee and the Vishwa Yatan Yoga Ashram Board, respectively. These included two airstrips at the two ashrams.

Mr Handoo said official records available with State Revenue Department showed that in 1961 a former Ministry had amended Section 147 of the State Transfer of Property Act to get the Katra ashram exempted from its purview.

However, the Mantalai ashram had been granted no exemption under the law.

This made the matter all the more serious, Mr Handoo asserted, because the law of the land said that no outsider, whosoever he might be, could acquire, purchase or mortgage any land or any kind of immovable property in any part of the State for any purpose.

The Minister assured the House, while replying to a supplementary question from another Opposition member, Mr Abdul Gani Lone, and an Independent member, Ali Mohammed Naik, that if it were established that Dharendra Brahmachari had taken possession of land at Mantalai and Katra by contravening in any way the law of the land, there would be delay in depriving him of the plots.

CSO: 4600/1496

GENERAL RAO ASSERTS INDIAN ARMY READINESS

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 1 Aug 83 p 9

[Text] New Delhi, July 31 (UNI)--The Indian Army is in combat readiness to repel any aggression on its territory either by Pakistan or China, the outgoing chief of army staff, Gen K.V. Krishna Rao, said here today.

Gen Krishna Rao, who laid down office today, said "Pakistan will once again get worsted if it embarked on a war, emboldened by the massive and sophisticated military supplies it had received and the prospect of acquiring nuclear-weapon capability."

As for China, Gen Rao observed: "I am sure that 1962 will not be repeated. Our armed forces in the northern border, where half the strength is deployed, will foil any evil design on our territory."

Gen Rao said following the suggestions made by an expert committee chaired by him in 1974, the equipment of the army had been considerably improved, covering tanks, guns, missiles and armed helicopters. Systematic training programmes had also been undertaken. The modernisation plan was being put through keeping a telescopic view of threats to India's security over the coming 25 years, an integral part of any defense planning.

Besides the Vijayanta tank manufactured at Avadi, India was purchasing T-72 tanks from the Soviet Union coupled with a plan to manufacture the same.

The project to manufacture the prestigious MBT (main battle tank) which would compare with the best turned out in any advanced country, was also being pursued. The first prototype would be out in December.

He expected that the production of MBT would commence in four to five years.

As for guns, 105 mm guns were already being produced in the country, the latest Mark-two version being a vast improvement.

About the military potential of Pakistan, the general said that "its offensive capability has got considerably enhanced by the supplies it had been receiving from the U.S. since 1981. Further, out of its 22 divisions, only three are deployed on the Afghan border and the rest were on the Indian side."

Pak Strength

Gen Rao said, "We should not forget that Pakistan has not fired a single shot on the Afghan side and it is still harping on the Kashmir issue."

In his view Pakistan was much better placed than in 1971 when it had to take care of the security of its two wings. The U.S. supplies were said to be of the order of three billion dollars.

As for China, he said, talks were going between the two countries for normalisation and there was no evidence of its giving any assistance to the last few years. Nevertheless, the border dispute still eluded settlement. The development of roads right up to Tibet, construction of airports in that region and the laying of an oil pipeline from the mainland to the far-off Tibetan region were developments which had to be taken note of in any long-term defence planning.

The U.S. naval vessels equipped with nuclear weapons and cruising in the Indian Ocean had also brought into this region Soviet vessels, adding yet another dimension to India's security, Gen Rao observed.

According to Gen Rao, internal developments, such as in Assam and Punjab, would have also to be watched and tackled so that these did not afford any temptation to an aggressor. He hoped that a political solution to the Punjab problem would be found.

Looking back on his long career, Gen Rao said if there was one thing he could claim as an achievement, it was controlling the insurgency in the north-east.

"Once the rebels were captured, I ensured human treatment to them and persuaded them to fall in line with the national mainstream.

Asked about deployment of armed forces for civil duties, Gen Rao replied: "Army help should be invoked as the last resort in the restoration of peace as in Assam."

Gen Rao disclosed that the government was now considering some fresh recommendations made by him for improving the conditions of the armed forces. He said additional benefits to the tune of Rs. 30 crores were announced on the last Republic Day for the armed forces covering both officers and other ranks.

Gen Rao said the package of concessions recommended by the three service chiefs were to the tune of Rs. 150 crores but it could not be implemented at one go. He was sure that within the next few months the government would come out with a few more measures of relief.

He said more energetic steps should be taken towards the rehabilitation of ex-army personnel. Some 50,000 or 60,000 people retired every year at a young age, compared to the other services.

"Leave Army Alone"

"Leave the army alone and don't bring in politics" was how Gen Rao reacted when asked about the criticism of the elevation of Gen A.S. Vaidya as his successor, superseding the vice-chief, Lt.-Gen S.K. Sinha.

He said: "It is extremely uncharitable to read any political consideration in this appointment."

Gen Rao asserted that Gen Vaidya had been chosen on the well-known and well-accepted principle of "seniority-cum-merit." The government has the right to select the best man for the job, and General Vaidya is a very competent officer and has considerable combat experience," he said.

The army chief said: "This principle is being followed in the armed forces as elsewhere and applied at each level from major to lieutenant colonel. It has been adhered to in this case also. I do not wish to say anything adverse about Gen Sinha who has been my valued colleague."

Asked why then Gen Sinha was brought from Simla to Delhi as vice-chief, he said: "It is a misnomer to think that a vice-chief is number two in the army. He shared the same rank as army commanders. Gen Sinha was shifted to the capital because it was felt that Gen Sunderji has to have command experience and he was posted in place of Gen Sinha."

Gen Rao said Gen Vaidya had played a vital role during the 1965 war with Pakistan in the Khem Karan sector where the myth of the Patton tanks was exploded. In the 1971 war, he led an armoured brigade into Pakistan territory.

As GOC-in-C Eastern Command, he had done commendable work in putting through counter-insurgency operations.

"I could cite many instances where army commanders and not the vice-chiefs had been promoted as army chief. Two ready examples are Gen Raina and Gen Bewoor," he observed.

CSO: 4600/1494

U.S. PRESENCE IN PERSIAN GULF CRITICIZED

GF201850 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 31 Jul 83 p 1

[Editorial: "Death of the Arch Satan in the Persian Gulf"]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. One of the results of the successful Val-Fajr II operation (the victorious Val-Fajr III operation have been added to it) has been that it has caused the arch satan to enter into a state of total confusion. Just when the brilliant results of Val-Fajr II were announced, the arch satan could be heard uttering gibberish. It was declared in Washington that if the situation continues to go in favor of the Islamic Republic, the United States would be compelled to intervene militarily in the Persian Gulf. Even if there is no other reason, merely showing its claws and teeth is sufficient proof that the arch satan has fallen into a state of confusion because of the victories gained by the Islamic Republic through the Val-Fajr operations. This is not the first time that the United States has received such effective blows from the Islamic Republic, but one must say that this blow has confused the palace dwellers in Washington so much that their minds have become unbalanced which has led them to utter gibberish. Military intervention by United States maybe nothing more than an idea, but it has positively proved that the dwellers of the White House have gone mad.

Before we deal with the madness of Reagan and his gang, who are considering military intervention in the Persian Gulf, we should analyze the causes behind such an idea. The fact is that the leaders of world oppression have so far benefitted from their policy of threats in dealing with the Middle East. The real reason behind the adoption of the policy of threats in the Middle East is the retreats to which the regional regimes have become accustomed to. To get what it wanted whether in Lebanon, Egypt, Sudan, and in another country in the Arab Middle East, the arch satan would resort to threats and the heads of the cowardly and pleasure-seeking regimes in the region would cave-in to its demands. If the beloved Palestine is gradually being swallowed up by the Zionists, it is only due to the gradual surrender of the heads of the political organizations to the illegitimate demands of the enemies of Palestine. If oppressed Lebanon is being gradually devoured by the world oppressors, the reason is that the government and the authorities in Lebanon did not take a firm stand against the policy of threats. If the Egyptian regime, in spite of all the crimes As-Sadat committed to

defeat the aspirations of the Palestinians, hopes that if it extends its hand of friendship towards the regimes of the region, it will not only not be rejected but will be embraced warmly, the reason for this is that it knows that no rulers in the region who would stand up to the policy of threats of the arch satan. The arch satan is also fully aware of this, and thus the appetite of the residents of the White House for the Middle East continues to grow.

The basic reason for the success of the arch satan's policy of threat in the Middle East is that the heads of the dependent regimes of this region have no will of their own and they rule their countries for their own benefit and not in the service of their people. When a person rules for the sake of meeting his capricious desires, then he will stoop to any level. Such governments are always shaky and have to submit to the wills of others. If the rulers of these governments instead of turning to their enemies, turn to their own nations and take a stand against their enemies, and with faith in their religion and God and with the support of their masses, they could confront their enemies and aim all their efforts towards the service of their people, then not only will their governments become solvent, but they will be able to turn the table on their enemies and gain the upper hand.

A clear example of this can be found in Islamic Iran. The monarchical regime was totally in the service of United States. People, under the teaching of Islam and under the guidance of a noble leader, who says nothing that is not in the service of God and who does not fill his own coffers but works in the service of the people, rose against this monarchical regime and toppled a 2,500-year-old monarchy which had the United States as its backer. Now, in spite of the direct and indirect threats of the arch satan, which sometimes tries to throw the Rapid Deployment Force into our face, sometimes threatens us with NATO maneuvers, and sometimes makes its existence felt through the drunken brawls of Washington officials, the Islamic Republic of Iran continues on its chosen path without any hesitation and goes forward without any regard to these boastful and grandiose threats. So precisely at the time of the maneuvers of the arch satan and its gang, the Islamic Republic of Iran implemented the Val-Fajr II and III operations, and inflicted another blow on the disintegrating body of the oppressors.

One of the reasons for Reagan's madness, a madness apparent in his stated desire to intervene in the Persian Gulf, is that he disregards the power of the Muslim and revolutionary nation of Iran. Another reason for this madness is that he is relying on puppet governments in the region. Actually this calculation is based on the time prior to victory of the Islamic revolution of Iran and now he should bring into his calculation the nations of the region and not the governments. The arch satan should know that it is the nations of the Persian Gulf region which will make the decision about the security of the Persian Gulf and not others. The arch satan does not want to understand this fact, so it is making preliminary arrangements for its own death in the Persian Gulf.

CSO: 4640/330

U.S., CANADIAN MUSLIMS HOLD SEMINAR ON HAJJ

Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 16 Aug 83 p 2

[Text]

CALIFORNIA, San Jose, (IRNA)- The First International Seminar on Hajj opened here on Saturday with the participation of Friday prayers leaders, thinkers and Islamic scholars residing in the United States and Canada.

In the first day of the seminar messages of a number of Islamic personalities were read in which light was thrown on the philosophy of Hajj according to Quran. The opening messages of the seminar said that in the recent centuries Moslems performed their religious duties in just formal ways, leaving the real spirit of Islam aside. In this way, the message pointed out, we the Moslems paved the way for discord and blasphemous forces in most of the Islamic countries and also in the affairs concerning Moslems.

The message then added that today committed Moslems have reached the conclusion that they have to revive the Islamic principles and will not allow enemies of Islam to con-

tinue their acts against Moslems.

Ibrahim Hamadani, mass prayer leader of Muslim Mosque in Sacramento, California, warned the Moslems of real danger for Islam and said that Kaaba was an important center for Islam.

In another part of his speech, Hamadani reiterated that Islam will be victorious despite all plots of Superpowers as it occurred in Iran.

Professor Mahmud Ayyub in his speech outlined the basic philosophy of Hajj and said that the Moslems through Hajj ceremonies get rid of devilish nature and consider them above from the boundaries of all sort of material factors such as nationality, class of the society, color and cast. Referring to the sacrifice of animal during Hajj he said it never means to bury the meat in Saudi Arabia. According to the real spirit of the sacrifice the meat should be distributed among the poor.

He concluded by saying that House of God belonged to no one but to God and Islam.

Abdullah mass prayers leader of Oakland Mosque of California, in his speech urged unity among Shia and Sunni Moslems and pointed out that it (unity) will not allow imperialists to dominate Moslems.

The last speaker of the first day session of the seminar, sponsored by the Islamic Association of Students in the US and Canada, was Irfan Al-Haq, a PHD student doing research in economy from the California University. Referring to the vast propaganda of Zionist media against the Islamic Republic Irfan said that the Islamic Republic was the only system which is supported and benefited by the majority of Iranian nation.

Irfan said this was one of the main factors that Iran could stand against the economic and political plots hatched by the Superpowers.

POLICIES EXPLAINED DURING VISIT TO EAST BLOC STATES

Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 17 Aug 83 p 2

[Text]

TEHRAN. (IRNA)- The Director General of the Office for Europe and America of the Foreign Affairs Ministry, Mohammad Sadr, who has returned from a two-week visit to Hungary, Bulgaria and Albania, said that the trips aimed at the expansion of political relations of Iran with these countries.

He also referred to positive stance of the eastern bloc countries towards the Islamic Republic of Iran, at time of imposition of economic sanction on Iran by the United States and its allies. He said that the Foreign Ministry held the view that political relations must be in harmony with economic relations.

The foreign ministry official further added that during his visits to the three countries he explained the neither east nor west policy of Iran and also presented messages from the Iranian Foreign Affairs Minister Dr. Ali Akbar Velayati to his counterparts from Albania, Hungary and Bulgaria.

The main theme of dis-

cussion with officials of these countries, Sadr said, was political, economic and the Iraqi imposed war.

Another issue raised during these visits, Sadr said was opening up of Iranian embassies in the said three countries. Hungary and Bulgaria have ambassadors in Tehran however, the Islamic Republic of Iran has not yet appointed ambassadors to these countries he added. On the other hand, Albania is amongst the first countries which gave official recognition to the Islamic Republic and has condemned the Iraqi Baathist regime as the aggressor, Sadr said.

In discussions with the Hungarian, Albanian and Bulgarian officials on the issue of the Iraqi imposed war, it was explained that the Iranian forces have been trying to put the aggressor on its proper place so that no dictator would dare to attack other countries. This stance of Iran, he said, was shared with the officials of these countries.

ENVOY TO KUWAIT COMMENTS ON GULF ISSUES

Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 14 Aug 83 p 2

[Text]

TEHRAN. (IRNA)- In its Thursday's issue the Tehran daily Etella'at published an interview with Shams Ardakani, the Islamic Republic Ambassador to Kuwait.

Commenting on the stance of Kuwait on the issue of the Iraqi imposed war, Shams Ardakani questioned the hypocritical position of the Kuwaiti government in relation with the liberation of Khorramshahr last year. He said that Kuwaiti media made no mention of this significant event in which more than 7,000 Iraqi troops were taken captive and over 7,000 were killed.

On the oil spill in the Persian Gulf waters, Shams Ardakani said that the oil spill from the Iranian offshore wells were not due to technical fault nor caused as a result of natural phenomena, but was the outcome of the Iraqi regime's missile attack on these installations. He added that Saddam resorted to such insane mea-

sures in the wake of his humiliating defeats in the warfronts and in a bid to impose a ceasefire under the pretext of making the capping operation possible.

Regarding the political stance of the littoral states of the Persian Gulf, Ardakani noted that in order to maintain security in the Persian Gulf these countries had to establish a viable relation with the Islamic Republic, based on mutual respect.

As for mine laying in the Persian Gulf Ardakani said that it was a measure carried out by the Sheikhdoms, in a bid to escalate insecurity in the region and invite the superpowers to intervene.

He concluded by stressing that the Islamic Republic wished to safeguard the security of the Persian Gulf, and therefore the Iranian navy had carried out extensive mine sweeping operations in the area, and made it secure for international shipping.

HIGH-LEVEL DELEGATION TO VISIT 11 COUNTRIES

Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English 14 Aug 83 p 2

[Text]

TEHRAN, Aug. 13 (IRNA) - A high-ranking political-economic delegation of the Islamic Republic left here Friday to visit 11 African and Asian countries. The delegation, headed by Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati, was seen off at the Mehrabad airport by Ambassadors of Syria, South Yemen, UAE, Gabon and Turkey here as well as a group of foreign ministry officials.

Before departure Dr Velayati in an interview said that several officials from the foreign ministry as well as the ministries of commerce, oil and Ershad-e Islami (Islamic Guidance) were accompanying him in the trip and that their first visit would be to the United Arab Emirates. The Democratic People's Republic of Yemen, Black Africa, frontline member countries, North Africa and the Middle East would be the

next places that the delegation would visit. In conclusion of this tour, Velayati said, the Iranian delegation would participate in the Palestine Conference to be held in Geneva.

Speaking about the objectives of this tour, the foreign minister stated that it was in keeping with the Islamic Republic's strategic goals which aimed at establishing strong, cohesive and all-out ties with all the Muslim countries, including the Third World nations. He said their talks with the authorities of these countries would center on mutual ties and international topics.

On the coincidence of this trip with the commencement of the United Nations General Assembly session, the foreign minister pointed out that every year, on the eve of the holding of the general assembly meeting, diplomatic shuttles were increased he added that this year too, a meet-

ing of the Non-Aligned summit as well as the Islamic Conference Organization would most probably be held in New York. Therefore, he concluded, the time for convening the U.N. General Assembly was of particular significance. Velayati continued by saying that the countries they would visit were those which were mostly members of the NAM or were Islamic countries or belonged to both societies. Hopefully, he stressed, this trip could fulfill many objectives.

Velayati in UAE

Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati arrived Friday in Abu Dhabi, the United Arab Emirates and was welcomed by the UAE deputy foreign minister, the Iranian ambassador there and Hojatoleslam Hadi Ghaffari in Abu Dhabi.

This is the first stage of the Iranian delegation's trip led by Velayati to the Asian and African countries.

Velayati is to meet and confer with the UAE ruler Sheikh Zayed. The UAE foreign minister is currently in London.

COPY OF KHOMEYNI'S WILL TO BE KEPT IN HOLY SHRINE OF MASHHAD

Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 31 Jul 83 p 4

/Text/ At the request of the imam's representative and custodian of the holy shrine of Mashhad and the approval of imam Khoymeyni, the great leader of the Islamic revolution of Iran, a copy of the will of the imam will be kept in the treasury of the Razavi Holy Shrine in Mashhad. This matter was announced by Hojjat ol-Eslam, Abas Va'ez Tabasi, the imam's representative and custodian of the holy Shrine of Mashhad in an interview with the reporter of the CENTRAL NEWS UNIT yesterday in Mashhad. Hojjat ol-Eslam Valmoslemin Va'ez Tabasi answered questions regarding his visit with the imam of the nation, the assembly of experts, the victory of valiant muslims and other issues of the day.

The imam's representative said this about his visit with the imam of the nation: "A subject which could bring good tidings and an honor for me and all the brothers and sisters in the holy city of Mashhad is that I have requested that the eminent imam permit us to keep a copy of his will in the holy shrine of Mashhad and the eminent imam immediately approved my request. With God's help, this process will take place at an appropriate time in an official ceremony. I wish this deed along with ever increasing favors and attention of imam Reza (greeting to him) cause that the great God grant a long life to the imam of the nation for years to come and until the appearance of the imam of ages, we will be able to benefit from the philosophical and prophet like guidance of the imam."

Hojjat ol-Eslam Val Moslemin Va'ez Tabasi, as a representative of the Council of Experts, in regard to the results of the sessions of this assembly said: "As you know the Council of Experts is the backbone of the Islamic revolution of Iran. The sessions of this assembly were relatively short, but during this time we studied very carefully all the articles of the constitution and whatever related to Article 111 regarding the qualifications and lack of qualifications of leadership. The committees were composing and the assembly was ratifying. In spite of the limited time, we accomplished an important part of this work, among them all the parts related to Article 111 were approved."

The imam's representative and the custodian of the Holy Shrine of Mashhad continued and said: "I must mention the sincerity and spirituality ruling the assembly of experts, both in these days that the assembly was in session and also in the session of Majlis, as well as the assembly held in Qom. It was the greatest blessing of God, for such harmony, sincerity and pleasantness ruled

the atmosphere of the assembly. Due to this very reason, the results of the session were very fruitful and we accomplished fundamental work. The comprehensive decisions adopted in this assembly could be used in the coming 50 years. I imagine shortly a statement will be issued by the Council of Experts and our Muslim nation will be informed about these nonclassified matters.

9815

CSO: 4640/320

SANE'I DISCUSSES HOARDING, TUDEH LEADER'S TRIAL, SAUDIS' ATTITUDE

Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 26 Jul 83 p 17

/Text/ Ayattolah Yusef Sane'i, prosecutor general and member of the Supreme Judicial Council, participated in a discussion on yesterday afternoon with domestic and foreign reporters; he answered their questions about aspects of hoarding from the viewpoint of Islam, clear religious jurisprudential laws concerning the punishment of hoarders and profiteers; the relationship of the judicial system and the Majlis; the reason for the delay in the trial of the traitorous leaders of the Tudeh Party.

According to IRNA reporter, Ayattolah Sane'i, the prosecutor general, first of all referred to the problem of high costs, profiteering and hoarding, and said that the punishment for hoarding and profiteering is quite clear in Islamic judicial law, and in order to combat the elements of high costs and hoarding, the government, by relying on the power and cooperation of the public, will take due action.

He added that consideration of the problems of profiteering and hoarding is not a matter that should divert our attention from the war, and we hope that in order to prevent all forms of injustice, and for the public to enjoy social justice, this sensitive issue will be dealt with.

In response to a question by one of the foreign reporters that the minister of justice does not have to answer the questions of Majlis deputies and that such a matter is not understandable and tangible for us foreigners, Ayattolah Sane'i referred to the relations of the judicial system and the Majlis and said that with due consideration to the conditions that Islam has set for selecting judges, from the viewpoint of Islam, judges enjoy the most independence; the sentence passed out by a judge is irrevocable. Islam pays the most attention to the conditions for selecting a judge, and in rare cases, when a judge makes a mistake, his sentence can only be reviewed by the Supreme Judicial Council.

Ayattolah Sane'i added that the Supreme Judicial Council, compiles laws in accordance with Islamic principles, and the minister of justice proclaims such laws to the government and Majlis and defends them. According to the Constitution, the minister of justice is not duty bound to answer the questions of Majlis deputies, and with the independence that Islam has accorded judges, no one has the right to interfere with and question sentences passed out by judges. Only

when questions by the Commission regarding Article 90 of the Majlis are put forth concerning judges and sentences passed out by them, does the judicial authority give the necessary explanations.

In relation to the delay in the trial of the traitorous leaders of the Tudeh Party, the Prosecutor General, promulgated some matters. He cited the magnitude of their betrayal, espionage activities and the necessity for party members to turn themselves in, which the judicial authorities have asked for, as well as the arresting of those who have not yet turned themselves in, he said that with the arrest of such persons and the completion of hearings and files, the courts will take prompt action for trying and punishing them.

In continuation of this conversation, the Prosecutor General referred to the recent warning issued by the Prosecutor's office concerning the avoidance of people from buying low-priced apartments which have tenants and said that this warning had only a guidance aspect and not a legal or an executive one and was meant only to prevent legal difficulties for buyers, as such, it was requested that such houses not be bought.

Ayattolah Sane'i then pointed to the punishment envisaged for hoarders and profiteers in religious jurisprudential law and said that the range of punishment for profiteering and hoarding in jurisprudential law is quite clear; and in accordance with the different aspects of profiteering and hoarding such laws have been defined and established.

He added that as stated, hoarders and profiteers, who indulge in such anti-Islamic acts, with a view to delivering a blow or toppling the ethics of the Islamic Republic, will receive punishment of the highest order; and if such matters are perceived by the courts, legal action will be taken.

In continuation of the discussion the Prosecutor General referred to hoarding from the viewpoint of Islam and said that there are two kinds of hoarding from the standpoint of Islam. One is the hoarding of general goods, including food-stuffs and fuel, which at all times is a sin and contrary to Islamic principles and the other is the possession of certain items, which according to the Islamic Government may be deleterious to the public, due to the prevailing conditions of the time or the region. This is considered hoarding and will be ensued by legal punishment. He added that from the point of view of religious law, the Islamic Government has a free hand in dealing with profiteering and it can set a price for whatever item it considers beneficial to the public. Observance of such prices is compulsory for all and nonobservance of it will be considered contrary to law.

At the end of the discussion, Ayattolah Sane'i referred to the reason for the problems caused by the government of Saudi Arabia for Iranian pilgrims and said that the government of Saudi Arabia does not want the people of their country to know that their wealth is being plundered by plunderers. They do not want Muslims of the world to become acquainted with the facts of the World of Islam. They do not want them to pay attention to the contents of the Koran and abide by its rules during the pilgrimage congress. It is out of fear from Iranian pilgrims that they resort to such measures.

He added: I do not know how the government of Saudi Arabia, by violating the direct writings of the Koran, which says the House of God is a secure abode for Muslims, intends to answer to its people and other Muslims. Ayattolah Sane'i hoped that the measures of the government of Saudi Arabia in creating problems for Iranian pilgrims participating in the Hajj ceremony, would be taken to task by the Muslims of the world and God forbid, the government of Saudi Arabia by preventing Muslims from participating in the pilgrimage congress would enable World Zionism from achieving their goals.

12382

CSO: 4640/310

RESULTS OF ASSEMBLY OF EXPERTS ANNOUNCED

Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English 16 Aug 83 p 1

[Text]

TEHRAN, Aug. 15 (IRNA)
— In a statement issued by the committee of Chairmen of the Assembly of Experts, the results of the first session of the assembly were announced.

During the first session of the assembly comprising 11 sittings, the assembly whose sole responsibility was to strengthen the leadership of the society and elected by more than 13 million votes of the Iranian nation, was able to draw up and ratify the internal statute of the assembly. Rules for the implementation of the Article 111 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran which called for the replacement of the leadership council member who was unable to continue his duties, was approved.

The assembly, which according to the law has to meet once a year, was formed to ensure the continuation of Islamic leadership in the Iranian society. The assembly was appointed the trustee of the political will of Imam Khomeini, as well as a center for the Ulama.

The statement in conclusion called on all bodies as well as the Council of Guardians of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran to continue their coordination with the assembly and asked to provide it with necessary guidelines.

MULLAHS 'MUST SOON MAKE GUNS-OR-BUTTER CHOICE'

London IRAN PRESS SERVICE in English No 129, 18 Aug 83 pp 1-2

[London IRAN PRESS SERVICE in English; weekly published by an Englishman]

[Text] With the widespread, virtually silent protest of hundreds of thousands of Tehranis on the anniversary of the old constitution in force before the setting up of the Islamic republic, confirming there is now sufficient resentment among the public for them to plan the beginning of concerted action the mullahs in Iran are reported to be aware for the first time that the break-up of their republic is now a possibility.

Reports from Tehran speak of rumours of Khomeini and other religious leaders associated with a hard line being warned by other senior clergy that public resentment over the failure of the revolution to take account of their needs threatens the future position of Islam and the clergy in Iran. They urge that Khomeini should adopt a purely spiritual role and leave the government to those outside the clergy who are sympathetic towards them before those opposing them seize the chance offered by inevitable anarchy if the lid blows off the seething discontent now evident in lower middle and working class areas of the cities.

The question of continuation of the war is now becoming important again, observers say. It is now becoming obvious to ordinary people that the massive drain of revenues in the war is leading to yet lowering standards of living, with staples, including bread, becoming in short supply. Reports speak of a further deterioration in supplies of flour for bread, the key part of the Iranian diet. Many bakeries have been rationing out bread to their customers in recent weeks.

While the protests about the worsening situation and suppression of freedoms by residents of the northern and more affluent half of the city have been muted some of the more densely populated areas of Tehran have been occasions of open defiance in which many provocative acts have shaken the regime. On the former Constitution Day people in many different parts of the city swarmed onto the streets, many walking and others in cars, in a tacit demonstration of opposition to the Islamic republic which was far too widespread to have been spontaneous, in the view of many people in the capital who did not take part. They said it was clear that for the first time there was sufficient strength of feeling that many different interests and groups had decided they should give a sign to the regime that all was not well and that if nothing were done then the same fate could befall them as had befallen the Shah.

The fact that Iranians all over the world also held ceremonies to mark the occasion could hardly have failed to be missed by the clerical rulers of Iran. The crowds out in Tehran streets on a Friday morning, in recent years a time when the streets are fairly deserted, and that vehicles clogged up some main thoroughfares must have brought to mind the days when their own actions outside Iran had such an effect back home. The spectre of a recurrence of events in 1978 must inevitably have been raised.

So what will the mullahs do now? Will they make sure that enough of the oil revenues are diverted for buying the food and other necessities which are now so short in Iran or are available only at vastly inflated prices? Or will they continue with their stubborn attitude to the war and demand more and more sacrifices from the people?

If it is the latter, one experienced Iranian observer told IPS, it will be only a matter of months before the mullahs face problems that they will be most unlikely to withstand. The pattern of recent events is shaping up very much like that of the events of 1977 and 1978, he pointed out, and a real student of Iranian history would note that attempts to deal firmly with them in times of stress always rebounded on those who tried to impose their grip in this way.

Many people believe the mullahs' way of thinking will not allow them to abandon the war in any circumstances until it can be seen that they are victorious. Certainly, it is felt, they will go on while they can still rely on good numbers of untrained militia to keep the war going for them. This means they do not have to accede to the conditions set down on logistical support and other matters by the military chiefs before the professional soldiers go into action--at least for a limited period ahead.

The concern there is among the leadership over the continuing unrest among sections of both the revolutionary guards and the professional forces is reflected in speeches by Khomeini, Montazeri and other clerics recently. Both the two named officials have stressed when meeting military delegations or officials recently, the need for the military rank structure to be fully respected, reflecting, some observers feel, the fact that there is dissension among some of the officer corps over the plans of those named to command positions by the mullahs.

While the military are constantly being exhorted to obey their senior officers the revolutionary guards are continually being encouraged to work together in a brotherly way. Khomeini and Montazeri have regularly warned that if there is dissension--which they hastily go on to say has not yet occurred--then a break-up of the guards could lead to the downfall of the revolution. The guards are also warned that they must not quarrel with the professional military, an admission that this long-standing situation still continues.

Interestingly, the revolutionary guards minister Mohsen Rafiqdoost and the guards' commander Mohsen Rezai never appear to be present together when one or the other is received by Khomeini or Montazeri. This again suggests that the quarrel which

became obvious some months ago between the two officials has not been resolved. The fact that both men have been confirmed in their positions also suggested, observers say, that both men have their support among the regime hierarchy.

Meanwhile, reports from Iran suggest the guards are still behaving very much according to the whims of their local commanders or their own for much of the time. Orders to move in on certain people who live in a particular way or to ban certain harmless activities are constantly rescinded, only to be activated again later. And the rank and file guards frequently act on their own initiative.

CSO: 4600/869

HARDLINERS SAID TO FEAR PEOPLE RETURNING TO MATERIALISM

London IRAN PRESS SERVICE in English No 129, 18 Aug 83 pp 2-3

[London IRAN PRESS SERVICE in English; weekly published by an Englishman]

[Text] The real revolutionaries among the regime's leading cadres see recent signs of unrest as reflecting a return to more materialistic attitudes on the part of the public, and they blame the bazaar merchants and their supporters among the clergy for much of this. They see the bazaar's manipulating of the supply market as one of the main reasons for the failure of officials to keep down prices. This is presumably why so-called "moderate" ministers like Ahmad Tavakoli and Asghar Owladi were recently sacked, observers say.

These radicals are still convinced that the Iranian public will react to appeals to protect the revolution and put up with hardships in its cause and pedlars of bourgeois ideas can be silenced. They see the solution in a return to the missionary zeal of the early days of the revolution and an appeal to support the war as necessary for them to implement their plans to nationalise more of the economy and bring the people under Islamic socialism of an idealistic kind.

"This is why they resent the so-called Hojatieh clergy so much, for these mullahs want the clergy to take a back seat in day-to-day running of the country and want only to give guidance from the spiritual aspect of things, to see the country is run according to Islamic tenets," a veteran Iranian politician told IPS. "But in fact the radicals see this position as merely a thinly disguised way of going back to the past, when the mullahs extracted their pound of flesh in return for keeping quiet and allowing the business community to make big profits and exploit the people. To the radicals, as Khomeini often says, politics and religion are one and they use Islam as a political weapon to achieve their Utopian aims and ensure their own place in power. That's what religion is about for them."

CSO: 4600/869

PERSIAN PRESS MAKES MENTION OF HOJATIEH

London IRAN PRESS SERVICE in English No 129, 18 Aug 83 p 3

[London IRAN PRESS SERVICE in English; weekly published by an Englishman]

[Text] The Persian language press in Tehran has avoided mentioning the Hojatieh by name until now and when an article in the daily KAYHAN discussed them openly the other day the writer, obviously intending to press the radicals' view, still felt it necessary to pull his punches in referring to their opponents. He quoted extensively from a book sponsored by the Hojatieh in the days before the revolution to indicate that the group was a conservative body who preferred a return to the clergy's former role and they should keep out of daily political affairs.

Because of this, the writer pointed out, the Hojatieh were not for progressive Islam but for a conservative Islam. But they must update their views in the light of the fact that in Iran an Islamic government was now in power, he said, pointing to the fact that the "Imam" had said that politics were more important than merely praying.

There was no attempt, however, to try to imply the Hojatieh were heretics, and most observers noted this fact as suggesting the writer--or his bosses at the Ministry of Islamic guidance--were wary of going too far in the face of the known influence of some leading Hojatieh figures.

Besides demonstrating that Khomeini does not enjoy absolute power the article does confirm that the radicals in the regime do see the Hojatieh as important rivals. The fact they have not been mentioned so openly previously reflects the seriousness attached to them as rivals. While the Mojahedin-e-Khalq are frequent butts of the regime's attacks the mullahs seem loath to draw the attention of the public inside Iran to particular nationalist opposition figures in Paris. This is seen as a reflection of their fear that these figures could be seen as more significant rivals if the public were constantly reminded of them. The radicals have taken the same attitude over the Hojatieh.

CSO: 4600/869

WEST MUST 'SUPPORT MOVE FOR REINTERPRETATION OF SHARIA'

London IRAN PRESS SERVICE in English No 129, 18 Aug 83 pp 4-6

[London IRAN PRESS SERVICE in English; weekly published by an Englishman]

[Text] The western world, concerned only with raking in cash from rich Muslims--or in the case of those with ideology with bringing down the present governments of most Muslim lands--has shown little interest in the recent call by King Fahd of Saudi Arabia for a reinterpretation of the Islamic canon of law to bring it more into line with situation in the modern world.

He said the suspension of Ijtihad (the process of reinterpreting Qoranic laws and the teachings of the Prophet Mohammad) had contributed to the decline of the Muslim world since the 10th century, when a ban had been imposed on additional interpretations.

"Today my brothers, you see a multitude of new events and many unanswered questions and accumulated problems despite the abundance of theologians," he told a conference of the latter in Mecca. "Today Muslim scholars are afraid to tackle with opinion the emergent phenomena of life."

King Fahd proposed the establishment of an international body of theologians to conduct meticulous studies and reinterpret the Sharia. It is planned to set up the body with Saudi Arabia as its headquarters.

Western businessmen and governments concerned with their economies are naturally unmoved by such ideas, for the revitalizing of the pathetically inefficient and uncreative Muslim societies would not be in their own commercial interests. They are always ready to back conservative forces. Where the rights of Muslim citizens are concerned some western organizations are ready to support progressive forces in individual countries, but western societies in general have never tried to pressure Muslim leaders into adopting a modern, liberal approach by concerted pressure on humanistic and moral grounds that would accord with the declared beliefs of those western societies on equality and rights under the law for all human beings.

Yet, in all Muslim countries there is widespread interference with the rights of the individual to live his life the way he wants and to bring up his children in light of his own beliefs if they conflict with the religious bigotry of men clinging to an obvious anachronism like the Sharia merely because it suits their mentality and tastes. Not only the scholars, as King Fahd contended, but a big majority of older Muslims is afraid to tackle the "emergent phenomena of life."

Two factors seem to be responsible for this. One is the natural conservatism of people brought up under a system of simplistic medieval values which appear to be immutable. The other is the widespread and intense resentment among Muslims of the sins visited upon them by the Christian world in particular and which, in their eyes, have contributed to the decline of Muslim societies. This is felt particularly among younger people who may in their hearts feel the absolute necessity of changes in laws and attitudes in Islam but who find that their resentment over the humiliations imposed by both western imperialism and western disregard for the well-being and true health of their societies triumphs over their urge to work for the changes themselves.

Thus we have millions of young people pretending to be devout Muslims in the spiritual sense when, in fact, the overriding emotion in determining their adoption of Islamic dress and manners is a political one. Groups like the Mojahedin-e-Khalq in Iran, for example, pay lip service to Islam but the mere fact that they can claim to be Islamic when they are committed to the construction of a society based on secular concepts in the socialist world signifies the lack of seriousness with which they view the spiritual significance of their religion.

In countries like Britain, where true believers are in a small minority, the church and the faith are used by the administrative and social establishment to shore up the structure of the state. Of the few who still go to church regularly a sizable proportion does so because there is nothing else to do and it is a form of social contact. But any move to do away with the religion and the churches would meet with the opposition of the majority of those who do not go to church or who have no strong religious beliefs because of the familiarity of the phenomenon in their lives. They prefer atrophy to destruction--and in addition the religious leaders have done a good job in painting themselves as the leaders of the defence against communism. There is nothing to be gained at the present time by weakening the church more than it has already been weakened.

In the Muslim countries the situation is different. It is the people who are pressing for a powerful Islamic movement to help restore their pride and to give them a say in the world equal to that of the non-Muslim societies of the west. The conservative Muslim leaders have so far been able to react to this with aggressive chauvinism geared to decrying all unIslamic things; fundamentalism has had an initial appeal because it showed signs of achieving results that more moderate attitudes were unable to achieve. The illogicality inherent in any form of mental process that requires submission to unexplained intangibles, as in Islam, makes it easy for Muslims to be carried away by movements of that kind. Similarly, those who are opposed to those movements in the Islamic world, again because of the mentality imposed by their simplistic beliefs, become quickly afraid of them and succumb.

In Iran 1978 saw an example of this mindlessness that not even the Arab world could match at its worst. This was partly because of the fact that a majority of Iranians had not yet come face to face with the modern world and were guided by suspicions and fears that had no material base. Only partly, however, for what became clear with the reaction of the middle and upper classes in submitting

to the Khomeini movement and then taking the ensuing bloodshed with such sang-froid was that they--and their Shia faith--were the natural heirs to the earlier religions of Iran before the arrival of Islam.

Even the immediately pre-Islamic period of Iran's histories was a hectic era of religious fanaticism, with new faiths beginning and to tolerance on the part of rulers veering to pogroms at the behest of establishment priests. The Shia church in Iran seemed to have adopted so much of the dark side of the plateau's mystic superstitions and practices into its beliefs and rituals, becoming a relaxed benevolent faith only when those darker aspects were subjugated during balmier periods of the country's history.

It is perhaps significant that the Islamic revolution of Khomeini should have occurred in Iran, a country where modern ideas and social progress had only begun to make inroads in the past 15 years and Islam had had no interaction with any other faith or ideas. And when comparing the Iranian revolution and its brutality with the history of the revolution in Egypt, where there has been relatively little brutality or bloodshed, it is easy to appreciate why the two movements took such different courses.

For Islam in Egypt had been exposed to other currents of thought for well over a century. Its nationalist movement in the mid-19th century was centered on al-Azhar, the centre of Muslim scholarship, and emissaries went from this institution to study and rationalise the values of those western societies. In addition teachers and others from those western countries propagated their own values in educational institutes in Egypt. Fundamentalism may be enjoying some vogue among extremists and the young in Egypt but it is--among the youth at least--a more sober, political reaction than a purely fanatical one. The trouble is that the fanatics try to give the young the leadership and encourage them to actions and modes of thought that are against their true aims in turning back to Islam.

The failure of western societies vis-a-vis the Islamic world is that they have become so incestuously involved in their own affairs as well as frenetic about money that they have abandoned any feelings, of the kind prevalent in the last century, of responsibility for their own beliefs in their relations with others. The people in the West, in spite of the enormous material and social benefits they enjoy, feel no responsibility for the fate of their opposite numbers in Islamic countries.

Western women's movements, for example, are more concerned with problems of the pill and getting husbands to wash up as symbols of feminine equality than they are trying to help their Muslim sisters acquire even the minimal social rights that the lower class woman in western society enjoys. They do not inveigh against Khomeini's hanging of young girls, they do not try to shame good Muslims into facing up to the reality of running a society with the values and knowledge available to the world in medieval times.

What is good in Islam is its basic evaluation of the dignity of man and his needs. But to encapsule those principles in a casing made to cope with the primitive needs of so long ago is to risk destroying the valuable kernel that even a non-believer in God can accept as a guide for everyday life.

Although he believes in God it is obvious that King Fahd, like many other rational Muslims, believes that Islamic ideals have a role to play in the development of future societies for those who are not believers, too. He must be aware that a faith that cannot serve and stimulate a healthy society can only survive if it forces people to live by its rules, as in Iran today. And the prospect then can only be one of the destruction of that faith once its inadequacies are exposed.

Non-Muslim societies should take seriously the crisis now affecting the Islamic world. King Fahd has put his finger on a problem which has been exacerbated since oil made the Muslim world much more significant than it used to be, a factor which has led Western officials and organisations to take up a sycophantic, hypocritical approach in dealing with it. This approach is proving extremely harmful.

What the Muslim world needs is constant pressure from outside for it to debate seriously the anachronisms in the laws and rules which are proving such a continual obstacle to social, academic and technological progress. Since there can be no social justice, for example, that makes half of humanity, i.e., women, unequal to the other half in the rights they enjoy, the rest of the world which no longer accepts the tenability of any kind of inequality must commit itself to dealing with this problem wherever it occurs. There is no justification for the absence of a full-scale campaign in the West designed to force Muslim states to consider indefensible laws based on primitive beliefs of many centuries ago and to bring them up to date. It is only pure materialism and greed that is preventing this at the moment.

It is surely a joke for countries which want to restrict their societies by use of the outdated Sharia to sit around the table at human rights conferences. Western and other officials should not hesitate to say so. We all know it is more rewarding from the point of view of the media and the world at large to speak up for the life of a man who has killed half a dozen soldiers or policemen for his political beliefs than it is for the insignificant little individual who is prevented from living a life of true freedom and dignity because some outdated dogma says he should do so.

Perhaps King Fahd has this fact in mind. His efforts should perhaps prompt the Western world to examine its own hypocritical stance on this question. For the misery and violence that will result from the turbulent currents that seem likely at the moment to provoke more friction between progressive and fundamentalist forces will be of no benefit to the West.

For there are 800 million Muslims living in strategic parts of the world. Merely dismissing them with a muttered "plague on their houses" as westerners do at the moment will be of no benefit to anyone.

And if the West fondly hopes that the Muslim world will serve as a barrier to the spread of communism it is making a big mistake. For the radical Islamic movements which are likely to be the beneficiaries of any foolish western attempts to bolster fundamentalist Muslims are as close to communist thinking as any of the radical movements in the West. Islam to them is merely the handle. The communist blade fits into it perfectly.

The only effective barrier to communism in the Middle East is a series of societies which enjoy the same technological and economic benefits as the western industrialised world as well as the same individual and political rights. It is because they enjoy these benefits that the industrialised societies reject communism or similar systems. The Western world must work to try to ensure that Muslims obtain them as soon as is possible--and that can only come through some basic changes in the way those societies are run.

CSO: 4600/869

INAUGURATION OF 'ISLAMIC STUDENTS' MOVEMENTS' CONFERENCE

Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English 16 Aug 83 pp 1, 4

[Text]

TEHRAN, Aug. 15 (Kayhan Int'l Correspondent) — A ten day conference of the Islamic students from different countries began here today. This is the second conference of the Islamic Students' Movement, but the first in which about 130 delegates from different parts of the world are participating. The first conference of the Students Islamic Movements was also hosted by the Iranian Students Islamic Association of Iranian Students.

While inaugurating the conference Ayatollah Sane'i, the Attorney General of the Islamic Republic of Iran said that Iran was the only Islamic country, in the true sense, which was following the path of Qur'an and the Prophet of Islam. He asked the students participating in the conference to witness for themselves and convey to fellow Muslim countrymen when they returned to their respective countries.

Ayatollah Sane'i asked the students participating in the conference to be messengers of the Islamic Revolution which has witnessed the worst kind of intimidation by, and oppression at the hands of, the superpowers. He said the Iranian Muslim people were suppressed, oppressed and martyred by the superpowers and their lackeys because they stood against their (superpower) hegemony in defense of their cherished religion, Islam. Iranian people do not like oppression and oppressors. We have stood against it time and again and we will continue doing so in the future.

The Attorney General of the Islamic Republic told the Muslim students they should not be afraid of anyone, but Allah. He said that they should spread the true message of Islam and the Islamic Revolution and that they should not be afraid, even if there is the risk of being subjected to different types of harassment and torture.

He said that the migration of the Muslim students from one place to another or from one country to another should not be like that of those who used to come to Iran to acquire shallow knowledge of worldly life and its pleasure. Rather, they should acquire the knowledge that can be useful for them in this world as well as the hereafter.

Speaking on behalf of the Islamic Students Movements abroad one student representative said that Iran was the most appropriate place for such a conference because it was the 'first country' which had decided to keep away from the influence of superpowers. It had inflicted a heavy blow on their (superpowers') interests. He cautioned the Muslim people of the Islamic Republic to be vigilant against nefarious designs of the Zionist and imperialist powers and guard the hard-earned Islamic Revolution which has been nursed by the sacred blood of the martyrs since its inception four years ago.

He said although the imperialists and the Zionists had left no stone unturned and had apparently failed, their latest design

was to sow discord and hatred among the Sunni-Shi'a muslims. He ridiculed the imperialist and the Zionist media for digging the old graves after the success of the Islamic revolution. Why did they not raise this issue before the Islamic Revolution? he asked. He added that Imam Khomeini has rightly said that one who talked about Shi'a and Sunni, was either Shi'a or Sunni.

President Khamene'i to the Intl. Students Conference: World's Arms Factories Useless Before the Faithful Longings to Establish Islam

The president of the Islamic Republic of Iran Hojjatoleslam Seyyed Ali Khamene'i, in his message to the International Conference of Islamic students movements said that with the passing more than four years since the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the balance between the two fronts (i.e the atheistic and imperialist front on the one hand and the front of Islamic awareness and growth on the other), has changed from the past situation. He said that the Islamic Republic of Iran was a dawn which portends the expansion of Islam and the establishment of just Islamic order for all the struggling nations. It encourages and inspires them to continue and intensify their battle against world imperialism.

He said that wherever there was struggle between Muslim steadfastness versus the pressure of the enemies of Islam, the sweet longing to establish an Islamic regime was on the verge of realization. The president of the Islamic Republic further said that the

Muslim students were equipped with the most decisive revolutionary weapon, the weapon of Islamic faith, and that Iran's Muslim people had proved the uselessness of world's arsenals in the battle field of Islam against kufr.

In his letter, President Khamene'i said that the new chapter which has opened in the world's revolutionary struggles, owing to the endeavors of the Muslim people of Iran has not yet been made known to the world in its true sense; and it was the duty of the all Muslims and particularly the students and youth to introduce "this great miracle of the century" to the world's Muslim nations.

And thus, he said, fear of the superpowers would collapse all over the world.

The president of the Islamic Republic also said that unity between the Muslim students and the committed Islamic ulema was one of the greatest necessities of the global Islamic movement and the true leadership of the Muslim World lies with those who have correctly perceived genuine Islamic knowledge of God's book and the Prophet's (SAW) tradition and have proved their faith by practising it.

Expressing hope that the conference would enjoy great success and represent another step forward towards the victory of Islam, Hojjatoleslam Khamene'i reminded the delegates not to forget the advice of Holy Qur'an: piety and remembering God in all acts, movements, thoughts, judgments, tendencies, friendships

and enemies; and the presence in any struggle the end of which leads to heaven

Representative of the Iranian Islamic Students' Association: Unity of Heart Between One Billion Muslims Terrifies the U.S and USSR

While addressing the conference on behalf of the Iranian Islamic Students' Association, one representative said that the unity of heart among one billion Muslims in the world and the rising up of Muslim strugglers against any kind of injustice, oppression and expansionism has terrified the great satan, U.S. and the invasive Russia as well as their lackies. They are terrified to such an extent that they resort to their last weapon, physical military intervention.

He further said that as the great leader of the Islamic Revolution, Imam Khomeini, has said: the ulema and the professors should endeavor to awaken and enlighten the nation with their own cultural and political heritage because the survival and success of movements and struggles depend upon the nation's cultural transformation.

He drew attention towards the heinous Zionist crime in Lebanon, the ruthless slaughter of the innocent Afghan people by the red army and the bombardment of villages and towns by the mercenary Ba'athist forces. The Iranian delegate said that heavy responsibility was on the students' shoulders, the responsibility of recognizing the truth, acting according to the truth and also disseminating of it wherever they go.

EMIGRE PUBLICATION REPORTS ON FORCED CONSCRIPTION

CF220712 Paris ARA in Persian 6 Aug 83 p 4

[Paris ARA in Persian; weekly published by Iranian dissidents]

[Excerpts] The free people of Iran continue their crusade to free themselves from the oppressive claws of Khomeyni and the plundering mullahs and forever rid our dear homeland of the presence of these godless and homeless ruffians. Now that the mullahs have realized that Khomeyni is near death and that the anger and unrest of the population is widespread they are again trying to shield themselves behind the Iranian youth and the students and to divert public opinion from the shortages. In this endeavor they are dispatching children to the war fronts to be killed in human waves.

According to one young Iranian prisoner of war a mullah named Sheykh Mehdi came to his home and gave some coupons, money and a Koran allegedly blessed by Imam to his mother. Having spent the night with the mother the mullah gave the youth a drink on the morning before his departure for the front which immediately gave him a feeling of elation. Our correspondent states that he expects this was some kind of narcotic beverage given to children who are about to cross minefields so they can confront death without realizing it.

Another young prisoner says: After father died at the front a mullah came to our house and started living with us assuming the role of my father. Eventually he sent me to the fronts. There they gave us rations for 2 days and told us to cross the mountains because the Iraqis were cooking meals for us on the other side! We were told that if we were wounded there would be nurses around who would take care of us. However, there were no nurses! The wounded were being shot in the head. We did not have any food or water for 3 days at the front. Some people drank their own urine or sucked the blood of their dead friends. A mullah told us that the Iraqis eat the bodies of Iranians so we should do the same to them. There were many wounded children begging for a fatal bullet to end the pain. The arms and legs of some of the wounded were being amputated without any anesthetic and the dead were buried in mass graves. A number of mullahs were killing children who had become hysterical by shooting them in the head. I did not volunteer to cross a minefield and die, I volunteered in order to escape from the terrible nightmare of our camp.

Another Arab-speaking Iranian youth said: They gave the Shi'ites green armbands and Sunnis red ones, which is the color of Satan. The Shi'ites got guns but we Sunnis received only wooden weapons or nothing. Our sole job was crossing minefields. We were ordered to move forward shoulder to shoulder and not to be frightened by the oncoming fire. We could only sleep for 4 hours each night. Food was scarce and drinks even more so. They once forced me to take the boots off the foot of a dead soldier and kiss the rotting flesh and apologize for not having been killed in his place. As a result I threw up all night.

This youth goes on to paint another scene of the mullahs' barbaric nature by recounting the following: Two drunk mullahs who were celebrating a recent victory undressed us and then made a show of pretending to stone us. After that we were raped a number of times during the night among chants of "Long live the Imam." In the morning while on the way to the fronts one of the group who was bleeding as a result of the previous night's repeated assaults and was unable to walk was shot dead.

CSO: 4640/328

AIR FORCE COMMANDER: 'WE ARE READY' TO DOWN SUPER-ETENDARD PLANES

Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English 14 Aug 83 p 3

[Text]

The following text is from an interview with Col. Mo'inpour, the Air Force commander of the Islamic Republic of Iran. In this interview, he has answered questions raised by the reporter of the daily Ettela'at newspaper about the delivery of the French Super-Standard fighters to Iraq, the situation of Iran's Air Force in confrontation with the enemy, and also the declining situation of Iraq's Air Force.

The text of the interview is as follows:

Q. Please, as the Commander of the Air Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran give some explanation about the delivery of Super-Standard planes to the Ba'athist-Zionist regime of Iraq by France.

A: In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful, after sending greetings to the Imam of Ummah (the Islamic brotherhood) the martyrdom-loving people of Iran, and the soldiers of Islam, I should say in reply to this question that: Material war equipment and weapons are relatively effective in battle and there is no doubt in this matter. But fortunately the Islamic Republic of Iran and its Air Force have never had absolute reliance on material weapons and have also benefited from other forces, especially the weapon of faith in God and the ideology of Islam.

The Super-Standard fighters are used in the Air Force and Navy of France. Their function — hitting and sinking floating objects, such as ships and smaller craft. These fighter planes can carry various missiles, including the "Exocet" which are also carried by Super-Freolne helicopters.

The superiority of these fighters to the said helicopter might be in their longer period of flight and a precision in aiming as well as speed. Of course, I should point out that when the Iraqi Ba'athist regime took delivery of the "Super Freoline" helicopters and "Exocet" missiles from the social-Zionist-French regime, it raised a great hullabaloo and threatened that it would destroy the Persian Gulf, the Strait of Hormuz etc. So far, in reality we have seen that a number of these helicopters have been hit and downed into the Persian Gulf by missiles or bullets fired from Iran's fighters.

Fortunately the Iraqi regime could not carry out its plans against our ships. Of course, it inflicted minor damage on a few of our ships, but it was not serious and in exchange for this damage, it has lost several of its Super-Freoline helicopters in the Persian Gulf so far.

The social-Zionist regime of France has removed the Super-Standard fighter from the assem-

bly line and cannot embark on producing it again. This is why it has ordered its Navy to place at least five of these craft at the Iraqi regime's disposal.

This is perhaps a rare case for a government to take war equipment from its own armed forces and supply it to another government — undoubtedly a sign of Mitterrand's fear of the victory of the Islamic Republic in the war.

As far as we can see this fighter is not something to become unduly disturbed about. The propaganda and the noise made about the craft is greater than noise of functioning of the fighter itself, so we have no fear at all.

They used to say that their Super-Freolne helicopters could not be downed under any circumstances. However we shot down several of them easily. And undoubtedly (with trust in God and owing to the efforts of our devoted pilots) and with our studies on the Super-Standard fighters we will be able to down and sink them at any spot where we find them in the Persian Gulf.

There is clear and assuring evidence that these fighters are vulnerable. We are only waiting to spot them. In this case, I don't think they'll be able to escape from our hands easily. If Saddam's regime is able to put these

fighters into operation before its own downfall, we will certainly be prepared to bid them a 'warm welcome.'

Q: What missions are the Air Force of the Islamic Republic responsible for at present?

A: Apart from defending and safeguarding the air space of our country as well as supporting the ground and naval forces in offensive operations, the Air Force has also extra territorial missions. Despite Iraq's attempt to reinforce its air defense, we have proved practically that whenever we have willed, we have been able to bombard our targets, such as the bombardment of the Baghdad oil refinery. We have ruined all of our designated military targets in Iraq. There are also a few power stations that we can easily bombard. But destroying these stations will cause trouble and discomfort for the Iraqi Muslim people whom we regard as our own religious brothers and sisters.

Q: In what situation is the Air Force of Iraq now?

A: The Air Force of Iraq has lost more than 300 airplanes so far. But, it still has a large number of fighters, ground attack, interceptor and reconnaissance aircraft at its disposal. However, the issue is not only to have war equipment and supplies, but faith in God and

expertise are also needed. These are what the Iraqi pilots lack.

Q: What role has the Air Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran played so far in repressing the futile attempts of the Ba'athist regime for destroying Iran's oilfields in the Persian Gulf?

A: Saddam knows himself that by hitting a few oil wells, Iran's oil economy is not paralyzed. He has attempted another strategy however, that is to pollute the water. Because the current of water is usually towards the coasts of the southern states of the Persian Gulf it naturally causes some difficulties for them. In this way Saddam wants to subject them to pressure in order to extort more money from them.

With regard to our defense against the Ba'athists' raids, we have so far shot down tens of their airplanes and Super-Freolne helicopters over the Persian Gulf. At present, the Gulf has become a cemetery for Iraqi airplanes. Perhaps, nearly 100 of their airplanes as well as helicopters and gunboats have been buried in the Persian Gulf.

Anyhow, with our facilities and equipment in the Air Force we have countered the enemy raids and will continue to foil their attacks. This is exactly why their attacks have decreased recently.

EDITORIAL BLASTS SADDAM FOR 'SEEKING PEACE THROUGH CRIME'

Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 15 Aug 83 p 1

[Editorial by Hatif Etesami]

[Text]

ONCE again the criminal regime of Saddam backed by super-criminals of the world, has created a tragedy of gruesome dimensions in Gilan-e Gharb and Andimeshk. In these bombings and missile attacks, more than 700 innocent civilian men, women and children were injured and more than seventy were martyred.

That such senseless massacres of defenceless civilians does not serve to bring any kind of military or political gain, however insignificant, is no argument to dissuade the bloodthirsty criminals of Baghdad, who revel in wanton killing of human beings. Such acts only reveal the depth of despair of the Baathist tyrants who now stand more closer to the verge of punishment than ever before.

The brilliant sequence of victories of the Islamic combatants against the demoralized Iraqi forces has injected new dose of mania into the failing hearts of the Baathist puppets. However, such madness will not only serve to hasten the approaching end of their power and expedite the beginning of the trials of Baathist mercenaries of Eastern and Western imperialism in the manner of the Shah's criminal generals.

The wretches in Moscow, Washington and Paris, should also understand that they will not be able to evade the mighty hand of Divine justice when it will snatch the criminals by the neck and mete out to them the punishment that they deserve. If the night of the oppressed of history is dark and tormenting, the night of oppressors will not see the light of dawn and their punishment will be as endless as their unlimited talent for crime and prolific genius for cruelty.

Those who sit in their air-conditioned offices in the fleeting composure and passing comfort of their tyrannical power, should know that their crimes will ultimately land them in the hell of ignominy and lasting punishment when the tyrants will wish that they had been allowed to remain in dust and cherish that they were wiped out from the scene of existence. Then they will understand that they have hurt themselves more than those who were victims of their crimes; for, while God shall ameliorate the sufferings of the oppressed, he will multiply the punishment of the oppressors from which there will be no escape.

God, in his infinite mercy will compensate the martyrs and the sufferers of the bombings of Gilan-e Gharb and Andimeshk, and increase the determination of their brother combatants on the fronts to expedite the victorious end of war with divine assistance. And victory belongs to God, who does not let down those who strive in his path and does not allow tyrants to flourish except for a while so that they may blacken their faces with their own misdeeds.

The expansion of the spirit of the Islamic Revolution and revival of true humanitarianism throughout the world will expose the reality of hypocritical organizations fabricated by inhuman powers in the name of human rights. Today, the martyrs of Dezful and Ahwaz, the martyrs of Abadan and Andimeshk, the martyrs of Hamadan, Gilan-e Gharb and other Iranian cities bear witness to the inhuman hypocrisy of these "human rights" gangs. They bear witness to the unChristian silence of the Pope whose frequent expressions of mercy and compassion are targeted to whitewash the ugly reality of oppressors and allay the fury of the oppressed of the world.

These martyrs bear witness to the verity of ideals of this Islamic Revolution and the moral and human bankruptcy of its enemies. They bear witness to the correctness of the determination of this nation to fight until complete annihilation of the anti-human regimes of the region. They bear witness to the validity of the stand of the Iranian people that there can be no lasting peace in the Middle East as long as there continue to exist such regimes as that of the Baathists in Iraq and Zionists in Palestine. The annihilation of the Baathist regime and trial of its criminal rulers is inevitable if the true respect for human life and honor for human rights has to be restored in this bankrupt world. The martyrs of Andimeshk and Gilan-e Gharb bear witness to the fact that that day is not far away.

IRAN

BRIEFS

MAJLIS DEPUTY BEATEN--According to a report sent to us by a Radio Iran listener, Fakhreddin Hejazi, a Majlis deputy, was attacked by demonstrators in southern Tehran on Friday, 5 August, and was severely injured. Fakhreddin Hejazi, was with a group of armed men inspecting the protest demonstrations on 5 August, the anniversary of the constitutional struggle in Iran, scolded a group of demonstrators and called them Savakis. The demonstrators in southern Tehran surrounded him and beat him up. The report adds that the armed guards accompanying the deputy, despite clear orders from Hejazi, refused to fire upon the people. [Text] [GF251532 (Clandestine) Radio Iran in Persian 1330 GMT 25 Aug 83]

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